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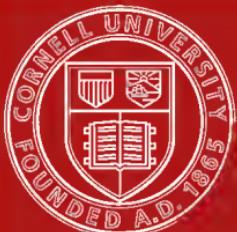
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Paradox on women, wherein it is sought t



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PARADOX ON WOMEN

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No. 113



Is she really human?

Lemercier gravure

Ed Carrington Editor.

DISPUTATIO PERJUCUNDA QUA ANONYMUS PROBARE NITITUR
MULIERES HOMINES NON ESSE.

A PARADOX ON WOMEN

WHEREIN IT IS SOUGHT TO PROVE THAT
THEY DO NOT BELONG TO
THE HUMAN SPECIES



P A R I S
CHARLES CARRINGTON
MDCCCXCVIII

À V I S

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PARADOX

on WOMEN .

ARE THEY HUMAN ?

PARADOX ON WOMEN.

NOTHING but insults? What a pleasant gift you will say, ladies. To assert that we do not belong to the human race surely that is the acme of man's malice. It is true that all that does not flatter you astonishes you.

Accustomed to being praised you are not used to the paradoxes of Theologians and Philosophers. Nevertheless a sentiment adopted by a great

part of the earth's inhabitants ought not to appear so absurd to you. No one is ignorant how you are treated

by Mahomet in the Koran. The women whom he admits into his Paradise for the pleasure of the elect are Houris, girls who are eternally virgins, and of a different sort to those who die every day at Constantinople.

The Paradox which is here presented to you is worn-out, and it is but reviving old rubbish, and yet it was nearly being passed as an article of faith in the Council of Macon. The fathers of the Council gravely consulted the question, as to whether women were human beings, and only decided in the affirmative after a long investigation.*

If the ancient Philosophers have had the same doubt, console yourselves, fair ladies, the Philosophers of your century do not think so ridiculously; they only attack your graces and your talents. When your sweet songs and melodious voices entranced all who heard you, a Philosopher of this century cried, "You do not know how to sing, you have no music in you, and all the worse for you if you have." † Another declares that "you do not know how to dance"; although in your dances your steps are so light and graceful. § Those brilliant eyes, ruby lips, that colouring and beauty with which you captivate. "All hearts do not belong to you," said another modern Philosopher, "they are but spirit changes". ** Continue to be always charming, and despise all these

* In the Council of Macon a Bishop having maintained that women could not and ought not to be qualified as human beings, the question was discussed during several assemblies; they disputed warmly, the opinions seemed equally divided, but at last the partisans of the fair sex triumphed and it was solemnly declared that they made part of the human race. Gregoire de Tours. L. 8. Polygam. triumpphan, page 123.

† ROUSSEAU.

§ CAHUSAC.

** MALEBRANCHE.

philosophical dreams. Become Philosophers in your turn, for in our time women can be so fearlessly. Predict the wonderful year when men shall become women to these wicked men who would deny that you were of their species, prove to them that, if there are examples of women metamorphosed into men, it is not impossible that one of these days men will turn into women.* As for you, faint-hearted women, who will be alarmed by the doubts cast upon your salvation, be reassured, you will be saved. The Reverend Père Postel promises victory to all women. If you are not redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ you certainly will be, said this good father by a certain nun called La Mère Jeanne whom I knew at Venice. Can you not believe the word of a so-called member of the Company of Jesus? †

* Plutarch relates that in his time a woman named Coeneus was transformed into a man. The *Journal de Verdun* makes mention of several girls and women becoming men. There is also a talk of a girl of 17 years, metamorphosed into a boy in a village near Charleroi. In another journal there is an account of a young man being delivered of a daughter.

† Guillaume Postel had been a Jesuit, he was an extraordinary man. Some thought him a prodigy of learning, and others a maniac. We willingly accede to this latter opinion. He has written a book which is very rare and choice, under the title of "Woman's Victory".

P R E F A C E.

THIS is the translation of a singular little book which appeared in 1595, having for title: "Disputatio perjucunda qua Anonymus probare nititur mulieres homines non esse." Some notes have been added, and some parts omitted which only bore upon the errors of Socinians or Anabaptists. The Author of this little work pretends to prove by passages of Scripture that women are not of the human race. A Minister of Brandenburg, named Gedicus, refuted this seriously without understanding the Author's aim, which was to make a violent satire against the Socinians; for what can one imagine more calculated to turn them into ridicule, or more mortifying, than to show them that the carping strictures with which they contested the consubstantiality of the Son of God, are capable of being turned to prove that the Scriptures nowhere call women human. Thus one is wrong in imagining that there is anything serious in this little work; as was before said it is literally nothing but a satire against the abuse of the Interpretations made by the Heretics of the Holy Scriptures. We know that all Heresies are only false interpretations of the Bible. There is not one, even to M. Lapeirere's fantastical ideas of the Pre-adamites, which

is not founded, if they may be believed, on the testimony of Holy Writ. Luther was quite right when he called the Bible the book of the Heretics. The Scriptures, said the celebrated Montesquieu, is a country where Christians of all sects make descents, as it were to pillage; it is a field of battle where the hostile nations which meet each other engage in warfare, attack or skirmish in all sorts of ways. Most of the Interpreters do not seek in the Scriptures that which they ought to believe, but that which they believe themselves, they have not regarded it as a Book in which were contained the dogmas they ought to receive, but as a work which could give Authority to their own ideas. It is for that that they have corrupted the meanings, and tortured all the passages.

We trust our fair readers will show no severity against this theological jesting. If the theory seem rather cruel to them they are not less the most cherished part of the human race: we are nevertheless convinced of the real advantages which they have over men, for we cannot deny that besides beauty and the graces of the body, they possess a certain delicacy of wit which men cannot attain by themselves. The man even who has the most wit is but an uncut diamond if he has not been polished by the fair sex.



PARADOX ON WOMEN
ARE THEY OF THE HUMAN SPECIES



PARADOX ON WOMEN.

**In which an endeavour is made to prove that they
are not of the human species.**

SINCE it is permitted in Sarmatia * to believe and teach that Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are not God, we think that it ought to be here allowed to teach and believe that women are not of the human race, and consequently that Jesus Christ not having suffered for them in this world, there is no salvation for them in the next. If in such a country of liberty, we tolerate and even sometimes reward those who blaspheme loudly against the Creator, ought we to fear punishment when we only attack creatures?

Readers will doubtless condemn us for the title of the book, but if they admire truth of opinion in Philosophers, they will not condemn us.

We maintain that we ought to believe nothing

* Sarmatia has been looked upon at all times as a barbarous country. The Greeks and Romans had their Sarmatia, we also have ours. According to this theory the Author, and the Translator are Sarmatians, consequently Barbarians. After this confession no one will be surprised to find barbarisms in this book.

that is not expressly stated in Scripture.* We ought not to believe that women belong to the human race because we can see nothing either in the Old or New Testament which proves it to us. We see on the contrary maledictions against those who add to the word of God. We ought then to regard those people as cursed, who by an evil interpretation of some passages would make believe that Women are human creatures, thus making the Holy Spirit say that which it did not intend.

The Heretics who have denied the divinity of Jesus Christ, although it is well proved in Holy Writ, would have been better engaged in denying that Women were human beings, since the Scriptures would have been more favourable to them in this respect. If we affirm that, if they are not expressly included under the name of Man, they are at least implicitly included under this title, what can one conclude from that? Can we call these beings similar to men? Certainly not; for the Prophets, Jesus Christ and the Apostles have not called them expressly human creatures, though they know that they can be implicitly taken for such. Let us nevertheless, examine some passages in Scripture, which can be turned in favour of Women. We will first quote that text in Genesis where God says, "It is not good that the man should be alone;

* To believe nothing but what is contained in the Bible and reject tradition is an Heretical notion which will make some women doubt if our Sarmatian could be a creature of the elect species.

I will make him an help meet for him". It is clear they say, by this passage, that the first Woman was created like the first man. This specious argument is evidently false, for God did not say, "I will make him a man, or a human creature which will be similar to him", so we cannot conclude from that that Eve was made like Adam. God only said, "I will make him a help". He did not say she would be similar to him *simile illi*; but *simile sibi*: suitable for him.*

We lay stress on this passage in order to make it better understood. When God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone, I will make him an help meet for him", we see nothing in these words except that it is not good to have only one man on the earth.

It is evident that he should have a helper, that is to say a means by which he can engender other men, so that he should not be alone. It is evident that Eve ought not to be counted in the human race, because she was only made so that Adam should not be alone, and that by her assistance and her means he could perpetuate the human race in order to give him companions of his own species to relieve his solitude. The mother of all herself confesses it, for when her son Cain was born she cried "I have gotten a man from the Lord" † God's

* Those who understand Latin will easily understand the difference which there is between the pronoun *sibi* and *illi*. It cannot be so well expressed in French or English.

† There is in the Latin version *Possedi hominem per Deum*: I have

design for her consisted in the propagation of children. According to some learned men, Cain and Abel were twins, and for this same reason.

But here is a clearer proof. It is certain that all philosophers admit two causes in every act of nature, one efficient and the other instrumental. The sword-cutler, for example, cannot make a sword without instruments; a writer requires a pen to write with, and a tailor cannot sew without a needle; man also cannot engender without the aid of a woman.* Now as the pen and the needle are not the work-people, but the purely passive instruments for the work-people who use them, so the woman is not an animal of the human species, but only another animal which serves as an instrument to the man in the act of generation. When we glance at the parts of women which distinguish them from men, can we admit any other cause instrumental for the propagation of the human race? The instrument is always a distinct thing and separate from the workman who uses it. Woman is thus also as much a distinct being and separate from man as the hammer is an object separate from the hand of the workman who uses it.

If any apologist for women raises the objection, God made him a help who resembled him, we possessed a man by the grace of God, but the Septuagint has rendered the Hebrew word Kanath by engender.

* I consider women, said a modern philosopher, are created solely to satisfy a disgraceful want, I think I ought to fly from them directly after the physical moment.

reply that the word *simile* (like unto) is synonymous in Hebrew and Latin with the word *conveniens* (suitable or congenial), for anything which is suitable to a thing is conformable to it. The tailor, for example, does not use a hatchet to sew a coat, but a means more conformable to the action of sewing, as a needle. This is why to facilitate the generation of man, God did not wish to give him, Adam, difficult means. He did not give him a quadruped, but an animal more suitable which resembled himself in structure,—in a word, woman. This is why the Apostle expressly says, “Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man.”

The sense in which we read this passage is that of the most famous Rabbis and Hebrew doctors, for they quote this word which to them signifies not equality to the person of Adam, but to the convenience with which he could generate. Those who are not satisfied with this interpretation can take the trouble to study the writings of the famous Theologians of our century,* and they will see that they are unanimous in teaching that the Hebrew word *simile sibi* which is like unto him or similar, is badly rendered, and is not the true sense of the Hebrew text that we should translate a help or an assistance (*adjutorium*) which is, convenient or useful.

* We must cite here the testimony of the theologians of the 16th century, for it is not surprising that the illustrious doctors of Salamanca of this century are not of the same opinion.

It is thus that Luther has explained it. Castalion, a famous Hebrew scholar, has also translated the passage in this manner, "Let us make him an animal suitable to him". *

What we are about to say will perhaps have more weight; God by his foresight knew that He would create Adam and Eve. If He had wished to make Eve of the human race, He would not have said in the singular, let us make a human being, but let us make human beings. Since God thus spoke in the singular, we may conclude from his words, that he did not mean woman to be a human creature, and that at the beginning of the World He only made a single creature of the human race, in the person of Adam. What! it may be said, the creature which is created in the image of God, is she not of the human race? Yes, no doubt, but would one have the audacity to deduce from that the inference that Woman is a human being, since she was not made in the image of God? The

* The Arabic version agrees with this sentiment, as do also Onkelos Jonathan, who translated *Secundum anterius ipsius seu quæ sit incumbens anterius ipsius*. Louis de Dieu favours these versions; he understands it to mean that woman was made to aid in generation, which is much the same as the opinion of St. Augustine, book 9,—of Genesis. St. Chrysostom seems also to lean to this opinion. He can scarcely believe that woman was given to man to be a help-meet to him. He thinks her only good for the propagation of the human race; for woman, he says, who ought to be a help and succour to him, is only his ruin, on account of the snares she spreads for him, and he well understood the Hebrew word Kenedoc, it was not to help man that the woman was made but to be always opposed to him. St. Chrysostom,—in Genesem. Cajetan is of the same opinion. Cajetan,—in Genesem.

Apostle St. Paul says positively, "Man is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of Man".* We see by this passage that as St. Paul refused to women the honour of being in God's image, it is evident that she is not of the same species as man. We must beware of asserting that they are human beings, in order not to blaspheme against God who would not grant them the favour of being made in his image. All the papistical authors agree with this opinion and refrain from contradicting this passage in St. Paul.

Suppose we grant that woman has been created similar to man, and that she has been made in his image, † can we therefore conclude from that that she is of the human race? Although man has been created in the image of God, can we infer that she

* The Rabbis did not believe that women were created in the image of God, they state that she is less perfect than man, because God only formed her to be a help. A Christian Theologian (Lambert Danoeus) has taught that the image of God is much more striking in man than in woman. The glory, the resemblance of woman to man, only shines on her face as a reflection from man, since she is formed of his substance. The Author of the Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul, attributed to St. Ambrose, plainly says upon the 2nd chapter of the 1st of Corinthians that women are not made in the image and resemblance of God.

† This human form in women, is rather embarrassing to our theory, but we ought not to trust to appearances. Newton has discovered that scarlet is not red, Malebranche and Barclay that we live in a world of illusions, where there are no bodies, and without wandering from our subject, we may ask if mermaids which, according to M. Maillet, so perfectly resemble our women, can be called human beings? Can we say that the savages from the Island of Borneo, who have human faces and bodies, are real men? And the Pongos, and Mandrilles, no traveller will assert that they can be men, although they resemble the human form.

is of the same race as God? Man only resembles God by his rational mind which is in the image of God, because he has a soul like His, gifted like Him with knowledge and power, and capable of knowing and loving God.

Had Eve been created of the same species as Adam, it would follow that two persons would have committed the sin of disobedience in the terrestrial Paradise, since it is certain that Eve was as guilty as Adam, nevertheless the Apostle says distinctly that there is only one person who committed this sin, "As by one man sin entered into the world", and not by two persons; it is therefore clear, that only the person of Adam is designated by the only man, and that sin had nothing to do with the first woman who is not of the human species.

It might be replied to this, that the Apostle meant to designate Eve, who was the first to sin, but the passage is so explicit, that it would make the Apostle belie himself if we gave his expressions another meaning. Some persons say that St. Paul honoured Adam in indicating him rather than Eve, because he has more dignity. If he has more dignity, the inequality is established, Eve would be inferior to him and would be under subjection to him like the animals, over which he had a superiority and a sway which his Creator gave to him. If the woman is subject to the man, like the beasts, what argument in her favour can be deduced from

that? * We must here explain two passages which may be construed against us. It is said in Genesis "Male and Female created He them". It is said in another passage, "And they twain shall be one flesh", that is to say the male and the female only make one man; or a single person of the human species. It ought not to be difficult to believe that in marriage two persons make but one man, since one is obliged to believe that three persons in God make but one God.

We can bring a grammatical reason to bear upon our theory; for this rational being which constitutes man is certainly of the masculine gender. It is then only males who descend from Adam that we can look upon as rational beings. We might perhaps quote some grammarians, who have made man masculine and feminine, but these grammarians are grossly mistaken since they have never found any author who has said: this man, *haec homo*. They do not quote this passage of Cicero where he says: My daughter Tullia was born a man, because it is evident that the word born (*nata*) does not refer to the word man but to Tullia. If we said Tullia was born an animal would it follow that the

* The inferiority and subjection of woman to man has been well proved in the Scriptures, and several tracts have been written to exalt the excellence of men. Milton made Adam say in speaking of Eve: "For well I understand in the prime end of Nature her the inferior, in the mind and inward faculties, which most excel; In outward also her resembling less His image who made both, and less expressing the character of that dominion given o'er other animals."

animal was of the feminine gender? Cicero meant to say that his daughter Tullia was born mortal.

To prove that the word *homo* (man) is not taken for the woman, we use the etymology of the name. The word *homo* is derived from the latin word *humus* (dust) of which the first man was made. The same thing cannot be said of the woman; it is therefore clear that she cannot be comprised in the signification of the word *homo*.

But let us leave these triflings and come back to the testimony of the holy Scriptures, in order not to deviate from one subject.

The woman of Cana in approaching Jesus prayed Him to drive the devil from her child's body, but Jesus did not answer her a word, why was that? Was it pride? We cannot think so, on the contrary, He was humble and gentle, He invited all those who were in affliction or pain to come unto Him and promised to give them comfort. His silence then simply meant that He had nothing to do with women, and women had nothing to do with him. We can prove it, He replied to his disciples who interceded for the woman of Canaan, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel". Oh, women! do you hear this answer? Jesus Christ has not been sent for you. And you, husbands! do you understand by this answer that your wives have no part in the Kingdom of Heaven? It may perhaps be said that the Saviour spoke so harshly to this woman, because she was a Gentile.

This remark is assuredly ridiculous. Does not God love all nations? Did He not send His son as much for the Gentiles as for the people of Israel? We ought to be ashamed of such an objection. Let us give the real reason why Christ has never treated a Gentile as he did this woman. Numbers of Gentiles nevertheless came to Hjm and asked favours of Him, did He receive them unkindly? Did He rebuke them? No, on the contrary He received them with unequalled goodness.

This is what is surprising in the same passage. The disciples of Christ having begged Him to send away this woman because she cried after them, He replied: "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." Let us admire the wisdom and sense of this answer. And you, women, do you remark how the Saviour of the world speaks of you? He does not look upon you as belonging to the human race, He calls you dogs as being of the race of animals. Do you remark that He says clearly that it is not right to take any of the bread intended for the children, that is to say that it is not proper to communicate to you His own flesh, which is heavenly bread descended from Heaven, because you are like the animals,* unworthy to receive this bread? It is then in vain to work so hard for your salvation; why do you try to act

* It is written in the text: *Quæ nihil aliud estis quam ipsissime bestia fæda*, we have thought it better to soften this coarse expression for the fair sex.

against the Lord's will? Stay then in the state in which you were born if you would have prosperity in this world.

If woman were of the human species, the Saviour would have expressed Himself badly when He said in speaking of the woman of Canaan, that it was not right to take away the bread from the children of men and give it to the dogs, because we do not take away that which is in common to different persons, to return it to some of these different persons, but Christ explained Himself clearly. Therefore humiliate yourselves, proud women, with the woman of Canaan when she said, "truth Lord ; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table". Perhaps you may be permitted to ask for the crumbs which sometimes fall from the tables of the masters, but not the true nourishing bread which God supplies to men, as the only persons worthy to eat it. These crumbs do not constitute a real nourishment which gives life, so therefore you will not thus gain the salvation you hope for. Imitate the example of Mary Magdalene, who feeling herself possessed of a devil and looking upon herself as a dog, crept imitating this animal to our Saviour's feet, to implore the help which she obtained by her humiliation, as did also the sister of Martha.

Our adversaries, indignant with us, may reply in favour of Women, that Christ said to the Canaanitish woman, "Woman, thy faith has saved thee".

When we are not guided by truth, we easily give in to the false. Christ has nowhere said to the woman of Canaan "thy faith has saved thee", but He said, "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt", or as it is written in the Gospel, "For this saying go thy way, the devil is gone out of thy daughter", but what was this saying? The avowal which she made, that she knew she was a dog * which could at least eat the crumbs which fell from the master's table. If the women of our century wish to free themselves from the devils which sometimes possess them, if they would avoid the evils and the miseries which afflict them in this life, let them cast off this pride which is common to them, let them own that they are truly nothing but dogs, they will then receive the answer given to the woman of Canaan, " Be it unto thee even as thou wilt".

Our arguments have perhaps little value. Let us agree to what Christ said to the Canaanitish woman, also to the woman who suffered from an issue of blood, "Thy faith has saved thee", but what can we conclude from that? Does it follow that women are of the human race, and that the women in the Scriptures obtained from Christ the salvation of their soul?

The word *save*, applies to the health of the body, because these women to whom Christ spake the

* Saci was of opinion that the woman of Canaan really believed herself to be a dog. Godly women, he says, have owned like the Canaanite, that they were but dogs, and in saying so they also believed it, as she did.

words we have quoted, only ask to be cured of their diseases. Mary Magdalene asked to be delivered from the demons which tormented her body, another asked to be cured of her issue of blood. Christ only granted them that which they asked, and they never applied to Him to save their souls, but only to cure their bodily ills which made them seek an efficacious remedy. This is why St. Luke has not written, "Thy faith has saved thee," but, "Thy faith hath made thee whole" and St. Matthew has added, "Her daughter was made whole from that very hour." We can assuredly conclude that there is no question in these passages, of the safety or salvation of the soul, since we only obtain it in the next world and that, according to some Theologians, is decided for all eternity.* One must therefore believe that it was only a question of bodily health, since in effect these women obtained it first after the words of Christ.

It may be objected that faith can only concern a rational creature of the human species. It is an objection which is inferred from the ambiguity of the word. The devils believe, it is said in Scriptures, and tremble; they consequently have faith, faith therefore does not wholly belong to men. We confuse the different forms of faith. We do not distinguish by this that faith which justifies the soul

* The subject of predestination is so sublime and so difficult, according to St. Augustine, that when we would assert our free will, we seem to deny the grace of God, and when we would uphold the grace of God, we seem to take away free will.

and which is the only true faith. Of this the Apostle expressly says, "There is but one faith." We do not mean, I repeat, by this, faith purely historic, which does not only concern men but women and devils. Who is the Theologian who has taught that women have a lively faith, against the opinion of the Apostle, who admits of no faith in women, and who says positively that woman is not saved by faith but by the generation of man. The faith of women is like the dead faith of wicked men which according to the Scriptures is more like corpses, than living men. If it were only human beings who were capable of having faith it would follow that male children, who are also human creatures, could have faith, and this as a most ridiculous supposition.*

These women of whom the Scriptures speak knew, and were persuaded, that Jesus Christ was the true Messiah, who could cure all their maladies, but they also knew that he had not been sent for them. This is why we read in the Gospel that the Apostles were surprised that He deigned to speak to a woman, and it certainly is very mysterious. The necessity which knows no law, compelled them to approach the Messiah; they went to Him asking to

* It is an insult to good sense, said St. Augustine, to imagine that when children are baptised they are capable of having faith. August. Epit. 57. The existence of faith depends on the reason, since there is no creature devoid of reason who is capable of feeling it; and if anyone would contradict this he must necessarily maintain that faith is born of ignorance, which is still more absurd.

be healed, when all the remedies they had taken for their maladies had failed, when according to the Evangelists they had suffered many things and spent all that they had. They came therefore before the Messiah, with tears in their eyes, and fear in their hearts, to implore His mercy and to ask Him, not for the bread destined for men, but for the crumbs; and prayed to have the happiness to touch, not His body but only the hem of His garment. Although the divine Messiah did not receive these women with kindness, although He rebuffed them as He did the Canaanitish woman, that He was angry with the woman with the issue for touching the hem of his robe, nevertheless seeing their great faith, He succoured them in a wonderful manner to the shame of many incredulous men who did not believe as truly as these women, that He was the son of God, sent for Adam and his posterity. This is the reason why the Saviour said these remarkable words, "I have not found so great faith",—that is to say in men, as in women though with these I have no concern. We ought not to be surprised at finding such want of faith in the Israelites, since Christ took away their heritage and gave it to the Gentiles. It has often been proved by observation that the faith and confidence that many invalids have for their physician, act as a remedy, and give them more relief and alleviation than the remedy and the arts of the physician. We can also assert that the great faith and reliance possessed by these women men-

tioned in Scripture, wrought them more relief than the divine Messiah to whom they had applied for help. We can therefore say without impiety that they were really saved by their faith.

Certainly say our antagonists we convict you out of your own mouth. You first state that the Messiah was sent for Adam and his posterity. If He had been sent for the posterity, He was sent for women, who are also Adam's descendants. Secondly you say that woman is saved by the generation. She is then, conclude our antagonists, a human being, worthy of eternal salvation. Wait; do not say too much about your victory; we will answer you, prove to us first that women are really Adam's posterity! You can never prove it; it is clearly shewn in the Old and New Testament which are Adam's posterity. It is easily seen those are descended from Adam, who are his sons and grandsons. Abraham is descended from Adam, Isaac begat Jacob, Jacob Judas, Judas Phares, Phares Esrom, and so on. But there is no trace of any connection or posterity of women. We are doubtful about their origin, we do not very well know from whence they come. It is clear that the posterity of Adam is restricted solely to men, whose origin is certain. Amongst the Hebrews the girls have no title, and no birthright.* We do not even find

* Girls did not inherit in Israel. The law of Moses was not favourable to them in this respect, and as it was decided that they did not form part of the human race, the natural right, this claim which appeals to the hearts of all men, was not acknowledged by the Hebrews.

that they were giyen the name of first born, like the boys, these latter were called the first born, even if they were born after their sisters and they were dedicated to God as the only creatures who would be acceptable to Him.*

As for the other argument, we can construe it in our favour. He will own that we have asserted with the Apostle that woman is saved by generation that is to say, by the children which are born to her, but we must not conclude from that, that she is a human being, and that she can have share in the life eternal; for the theologians of all sects have taught that the human being is justified by faith, as the rest of men, but by generation. We ought to interpret the word *saved*, by the health, and the honours which she obtains in this world. We see nowhere that the woman without children will be damned on that account, she was only disgraced and despised by the ancient law, which was enough to make her life sad and dull, for it is written; "Woe unto the barren woman who has no children in Israel," and it is added, "Blessings be on the fertile woman who leaves children in Israel!" because this last has fulfilled the conditions which the Creator has imposed upon her, to assist in the propagation of the human race, whilst the

* We may add, that when God divided the promised land between the Children of Israel, He would not admit women into the distribution, because, according to the idea of St. Cyril, God rejects that which is reprehensible and imperfect, and will only give the promised land to men, because they are pleasing to Him. Cyril, liv. 3.

barren woman is perfectly useless in the world.*

It would be folly to think that in this passage there is any question of the salvation of women's souls. If they were saved by their children, the death of the Saviour would be as useless as their faith. It would also follow that there is no salvation for virgins, or for women who have had no children, whilst, on the contrary, women who had led evil lives and have had children, would obtain the salvation of their souls.

Nevertheless it is written in Scripture, "Woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days." Does the evil with which they are threatened, agree with their salvation by generation?

"But take care," still say our antagonists, the Apostle has certainly said that women are saved by their children, but he adds in the same passage, "If they continue in the faith."† We reply that we find the passage differently rendered in the original and in the old manuscripts of scripture. We read: "If their sons continue in the faith." Which meaning

* Virginity was a disgrace amongst the Hebrews. A greater insult could not be offered to a man, than to reproach him with not continuing the race of his fathers, and not making their name live in Israel. It was for this that the daughter of Jephthah wept, that she put on mourning as for a dead person, because she would die without having been married, and without having given heirs to her father. From that cause are the threats of God in Isiah 4. 1. Jeremiah 31. 22.

† The plural in Greek reads, "If they continue in faith and charity". The greater number of Fathers and Interpreters, attribute it to the children, and not to the mothers, like St. Jerome, and St. Ambrose, etc. Sacy has decided in favour of this opinion.

shall we give to it? If you say that women obtain the salvation of their souls if they continue in the faith? Then it is by faith they will be saved? You therefore will not agree with the Apostle, who distinctly says they cannot be saved except by the children that are born to them. It would be better to abide by the other meaning which agrees with the Scriptures; but it is in other respects reasonable to think that as those sons who do not continue in faith ought not to be the cause of their mother's damnation, for the same cause, those who continue in the faith ought not to be the cause of their salvation. We should therefore be right in concluding that the woman who has children only obtains blessings in this world. We have but the example of the Virgin Mary, who on account of her Son, has been blessed above all other women and has received in consequence an eternal reward.

There are those who may perhaps pretend to advance an argument difficult to resolve, when they argue that women are human creatures, because we read in the Scriptures, that their sins have been forgiven them. They cite the example of Mary Magdalene the sinner, to whom Christ said: "Go, thy sins are forgiven thee"; but we cannot deduce an inference from a simple example, for although women have received pardon for their sins, we cannot conclude from that that they are of the human race. The Prohibition of God to eat the fruit of the tree of life had no reference to woman, but to

man, for the woman was not created when God made the commandment: "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it." This warning was not even repeated to Eve after her creation; moreover God did not call her after the disobedience but only said, "Adam, where art thou?" It was to Adam only that God spoke, He did not reproach Eve. * It is further written, that we have all sinned in the person of Adam and not in the person of Eve, † that we have contracted the original sin of our father and not of our mother. This is why under the ancient law all the male children were circumcised; the girls were not circumcised, because it was only necessary to wash the pollution of original sin in that sex which had contracted it. § Now if woman has not contracted

* It was only after the fall of Adam that God conversed with our first forefather. It was to Adam only that God first addressed Himself after the fall, it was Adam to whom God spake in such poignant words, when seeing him clothed in skins He said: "Here is Adam who has become like unto us; and it seems that Adam only was driven out of Paradise, without reference to Eve, for Scripture only mentions him in the departure. For fear it is written, that Adam would still eat of the tree of life, and lest he should live eternally, God sent him out of the garden of pleasure.

† God, said the learned Dom Cahuet, made an alliance with Adam, He promised to make him happy, and Adam promised to obey Him. Woman counts for nothing in this alliance, she could not have broken it by her personal infidelity, from which we may infer that if Eve had sinned, and she alone, her sin would have only done harm to her, and not to her posterity. We must conclude by this that it is only men who have sinned in Adam.

§ St. Augustine; St. Prosper, St. Fulgence, St. Gregory, St. Bernard the Great, the Venerable Bede, and several doctors, have appeared

original sin, she does not sin at the present time, because it is a principle of religion that men would not sin if they had not been born in original sin derived from Adam. After what we have just said, it is easy to understand that if women sin, their sins are not different from the faults that animals commit, that they are only mere stupidities or trifles. It may be said that we cannot look after this fashion upon the sins of Mary Magdalene?* We should reply that the swine were also possessed of devils although they were not guilty of

to approve of what is stated. They affirm that circumcision remitted original sin, and conferred justifying grace, and whoever had not received it, was eternally deemed. St. Augustine proves in the words of the establishment of circumcision the proof of this opinion. "All male children" it is written, "of which the skin of the prepuce has not been circumcised, will be exterminated by his people, because he has violated my alliance." He maintains that "to be cut off from his people" signifies to be condemned to Hell, and that the alliance referred to in these words "he has violated my alliance" can only refer to that which God made with Adam, and that we have all broken in his person. Besides the Samaritan version of Scripture favours this opinion, as well as the Hebrew where these words, the 8th day, are no longer read. If the opinions of these saintly personages were founded on truth, what became of the salvation of the poor women in Israel?

Strabo believed that the Jews had a law which ordered them to circumcise girls, but it is not an act of religion, it is rather an operation of surgery to cure the inconvenience of long nymphæ.

* The sins of Mary Magdalene did not render her demoniacal; it was a convulsive malady. The Jews attributed the greater number of maladies, especially those which troubled the mind and distorted the members, to the malice of demons; they imagined that these maladies could only be cured by sending them out. Thus we see in Scripture that when Christ cured the maladies and the possessed, the Jews said it was by virtue of the demons that He performed these miracles.

any sin. The Apostle gives his support to the argument when he says, "By one *man* sin entered into the world" (Adam). Woman not having sinned has not wanted a mediator. He has only come to save men who have received the sin of Adam. The Redeemer on the contrary had to be born of a woman who was like Him, without blemish or sin. There is no question of any woman being damned in the Scripture, which proves that being incapable by their condition of offending the Divinity, they were also safe from eternal perdition.

Nevertheless we read that Eve said to the serpent, "God has forbidden us to touch the tree of life." She erred in speaking thus; for God in making this prohibition, did not address Himself to her but to Adam. He did not forbid him to touch this tree, but to eat of the fruit thereof. Eve also added, "For fear perhaps that we should die." This was unreasonable.*

If she believed in the threat attached to the warning, why did her words imply doubt? Moreover the serpent replied to her positively: "No, thou shalt not die." It is as if he had said: "Why should'st thou die? the prohibition does not concern thee." The event proved that Eve did not die after having eaten the apple; her eyes were not opened till after Adam had eaten; at least Eve could not have found out that the curse followed immediately

* Hebrew, Chaldean, and Syrian incline to the second person. "For fear thou shalt not die." The threat then only applied to Adam,

upon the offence since she offered the fruit to Adam. But why, may be asked, did God punish her? It is nothing to be surprised at, for God also punished the serpent who had not been forbidden to eat it, and who was not a human being. We can even deny that Eve was punished for eating forbidden fruit; for how could we make the punishment consist in what God said, "In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children?" She had not seen the tree of life when God forbade the fruit to be eaten. The pain which woman suffers in bearing children is transitory; it arises from the irritability of the fibres and is common to all female animals, who certainly have not eaten forbidden fruit.* If we search the Scriptures we shall see that far from women having been blamed for their crime and their perfidy they have on the contrary received praise and blessings. Rachel is praised for the trick she played upon her father, in hiding the golden idols which she stole from him when she left home. Rebecca was applauded for the artifice which she used to make her husband Isaac bless his son Jacob to the prejudice of his son Esau. The treason of the courtesan Rahab, who hid the spies of Joshua, has been commended, as an act of justice. When Sisera fled after his defeat, Jael met him and made him enter her tent. As his hurried flight had worn out his

* When it was maintained to Père Malebranche that animals were not simple machines, but were sensible of pain, he replied pleasantly that apparently they had not eaten forbidden hay.

strength, he laid himself to rest and Jael covered him, after giving him milk, instead of the water he asked for. When Sisera was in a deep sleep, Jael took a large nail which she drove in his head, and barbarously nailed to the earth the head of this General who had trusted himself to her good faith. This detestable action has nevertheless been loaded with praise.

It is written in the Scriptures, that Jael shall receive every kind of blessing. No one is ignorant of the history of Judith, who after gaining the confidence and trust of Holofernes by her perfidious caresses, cut off his head. Scripture has exalted the action as deserving the highest praise; it seems that the iniquity of women was considered more as a virtue than the honesty of men.*

The daughters of Lot were not blamed for their incest with their father, though the son of an incestuous mother is declared unworthy to serve in the Church of Christ. The incestuous Tamar also received pardon for her crime and is declared more just than the patriarch Judah; her incest did not take from her the privilege of continuing the line of which the Messiah was born. We see also in Holy Scriptures that Christ absolved the woman taken in adultery and did not permit her to be punished. The laws of the Roman Emperors did

* If the iniquity of women is praised in Scripture, their good actions on the other hand, are strongly depreciated; for it is written in Scripture that the iniquity of man is more estimable than a good action of a woman,

not permit adulteresses to be put to death or to be sent to prison for debt.

All this proves that their sins are not accounted as real sins; and this is the reason that St. Luke relates that the guests who were seated at the table of Simon the Pharisee, with Christ, were surprised that He forgave Mary Magdalene her sins, when she had not sought pardon for them, but only asked for her body to be freed from devils. The object of the remission of her sins, had no regard to her eternal life but to the deliverance of her body from devils. Thus the remission of sins, in women, ought to be taken in a different sense, to the remission of sins in men. Let us add that the Saviour having taught the Lord's prayer to the Apostles who were men, it is only meet for them and not for women to say in their prayers "Forgive us our trespasses." *

In proof of our theory we can affirm that the reason why the Apostles rebuffed the women who brought their children to Christ was because amongst those children there were certainly some

* The Turkish women, on the coast of Barbary, thought themselves dispensed from reciting prayers. Nearly every one in this country believed and they themselves are fully persuaded, that God only created them in order that they might contribute to the pleasure of the other sex, and perpetuate the human race. This opinion extinguished every trace of virtue in them. Men only esteemed them for their own pleasure, and they were despised when they became useless to them. *Vide Hist. Moderne, de l'Abbaye Marsy.*

young girls, for whom the Messiah was not sent.*

The Sadducees asked Christ to whom the woman who had married seven brothers, belonged in the resurrection. He replied, "Do ye not therefore err because ye know not the Scriptures?" But why were they in error? Because they probably believed in the resurrection of women; misunderstanding the Scriptures, where there is no question of their salvation. Jesus continued to say to them: "For when they rise from the dead they neither marry, nor are given in marriage but are as the angels which are in heaven." Why so? Because there will be no women in the resurrection, men will then be like unto the angels of God, in heaven. What are the angels like, now, in heaven? They have certainly no affinity to women, there is no mention of a female angel. Let us then conclude that only men can enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus said to his own mother: "Woman what have I to do with thee."

If He did not belong in any way to His mother who engendered Him, there was certainly much less relation between Him and other women. It may be objected that if Christ were called the Son of man, Mary ought to be called a human being. We can grant that, but it must be acknow-

* God is called in the Scriptures the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the men are here called the children of God, and girls the children of men.

ledged that it is more by the grace of God, than by her own nature. This is why the angel said: "Hail thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou amongst women."

Why has she been blessed above all other women? Because she has been granted the favour of being made a human creature, in preference to all other women. She can reasonably be given the name of man, because she begat without the help of any man, and she herself performed the function of a man. When the women of our century take it into their heads, to have children without the help of men, we will willingly believe that they deserve as much as they do, and that they are of the same species.*

A woman who followed Jesus cried out from the middle of the crowd: "Blessed is the womb that bore thee and the paps which thou hast sucked!" Christ answered: "Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." We can see by that that He called in question the salvation of His mother. What can we think of the salvation of other women? It is usual to cover all that is

* Some Rabbis have believed that there is a difference of sex amongst angels, the one males and the other females; but we have long known that this was a dream of the Rabbis.

* Pomponius Mela has spoken of an island near to Ethiopia where there are women who have children without the company of any men. Our modern geographers and travellers make no mention of this isle, which was apparently one of those floating islands which have been submerged. What a pity such a race of women should have been lost.

foul and immodest; hence since the Apostle expressly recommends women to cover their heads, we may conclude that they were sullied in the sight of God; they cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven, since it is written that nothing defiled or impure can enter therein. It is also written that women who give themselves over to voluptuousness, are regarded as dead, although they appear to be living.

The following passage of St. Paul to the Galatians has been cited, against our opinions: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." They wish to prove by this, that woman is a human being. The inference is not right; for in reasoning thus, we might infer that the Jew and the Greek are men, and draw an inference which would be ridiculous upon a fact which no one doubts. The Jew and the Greek cast off their nationality that they may live only in Christ Jesus. Now in order that woman may also be with man a creature in Christ, she must cast off her sex; but as the thing is impossible we can infer from that, how much she belongs to Christ. Men can cast off the old man (Adam); but has any one ever seen in any part of Scripture that women were asked to cast off the old woman (Eve)?

We cannot see how women can make one with men, in Christ, since Christ himself and the Apostles have commanded men to leave their wives, in order

that they may become perfect, and obtain eternal life.

The eunuchs who have no connection with women are extremely praised in Scripture ; Christ was not united to any woman, the Apostles sent them away, and advised others to do the same adding that those who defiled themselves did not please God and that it is well for man to have nothing to do with woman.

If the absurd objection is made that a woman is so convinced that she has given birth to a human being when a girl is born, that she rejoices according to the Scriptures in spite of her pain, we reply that it is not very common to see women rejoice in the birth of a girl, that they show much joy in the birth of a boy which is not very surprising according to Aristotle, since he asserts that a girl is a monster in nature, * or rather as Plato says, an

* Aristotle has maintained that nature only formed women, when on account of the imperfection of nature, she could not make the perfect sex. The Platonic philosophers had a similar idea. Marsilio Ficino asserts that the generative virtue of man strives to produce a male, as being that which is the most perfect of his kind, but that universal nature sometimes wishes for a female in order that the propagation due to the conourse of the two sexes shall perfect the universe. The famous Scott has written that woman is only an accident of man, that it is only by occasion that woman is what she is, nature intends to produce a man but does not always succeed on account of the indisposition of him who engenders or her who concurs, and then against her first intention she only produces a woman.

What is more surprising is that this bizarre idea of Aristotle has been believed by St. Thomas, Cajetan, and several other scholars. The greater part of ancient philosophers have also regarded woman as a man missed.

animal destitute of reason. Besides it is written, that woman will be saved by the sons born unto her, and not by the daughters, which is a sufficient motive to make her rejoice in the birth of a boy, and which proves that the passage in question has only reference to the birth of male children. Search the Scriptures as much as we will, we shall always find in every passage that the word man only applies to men and not to women. I consent to lose their favour, if a single passage can be found to the contrary.

We must not pass in silence a passage of St. Luke, which can be quoted against us: it is said that Christ brought the daughter of Jairus to life again. Here is a proof that women rise from the dead. We must mind that it is written: Jesus said, "Why make ye this ado and weep? The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth."

It is clear from these words, that if this girl had been dead Christ would not have resuscitated her. It is certain, by the witness even of the Messiah, that she only slept, and was not dead as they thought; consequently it was not surprising that

Plato doubted if he ought to class women with animals. Anaximander had the presumption to believe they were very inferior to men. Chrisippus regarded them as an ornament which God gave as a present to men. We suppress the taunts of the other philosophers, we only add that all the poets and great philosophers since Orpheus have spoken evil of women. Euripides insulted them, and all that remains to us of Simonides is a violent invective against them. The Latin poets have not been more favourable. If we are to believe Vossius, the grave Jurisconsult Cujas also wished to make sport of them in adopting our paradox.

she was not brought to life again. Christ forbade those who were present, to talk to any one about what had happened. Why so? In order that women might not take example from this resurrection and foolishly imagine that one day they would rise again to have a share in eternal salvation.*

When Jesus resuscitated the young man He did not forbid them to make known this resurrection. The Evangelist says on the contrary that "This rumour of Him went forth throughout all Judæa and throughout all the region round about." St. Luke still further proves our assertion. A servant of Jairus came and said to Him, "Thy daughter is dead, trouble not the Master" (Jesus). This servant evidently was of the general opinion that girls, or women, being once dead, ought not to be brought to life again, and had no need of Christ's help. Although the daughter of Jairus was resuscitated,

* Several grave persons as St. Jerome, St. Hilary, St. Basil, Origen, St. Tertullian, had a singular idea on the resurrection of women. They maintain that they do not rise again in their own sex, founded principally on these words of St. Paul: "Till we all come in the unity of the Faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." And thus: "To be conformed to the image of His Son Jesus Christ." They add to these texts many Theological and Philosophical reasons; for example that *man* only was created from the earth, and that woman is a monster of nature, etc.

According to this opinion we may conclude that women do not rise again in their own sex, with their own bodies, never rise again in point of fact; because that which essentially characterises women is their proper sex, if they are not resuscitated in their own sex, they are resuscitated as men; but they have ceased to be women.

we cannot make it a general rule for other women. We read in a legend that St. Germain brought an ass to life, it is only an ass who would affirm that there is a resurrection for asses.

We can nowhere see in the Scriptures that women have received the Communion of the Eucharist. Christ did not instruct His disciples to administer this Sacrament to them because He did not come into the world to suffer for them. Nevertheless Scripture makes mention of women being baptised.

But it must be admitted that Churches, clocks, and ships are baptised every day; can we say that they are human beings? To administer baptism to women, is to act against the commandment which says clearly, "He that believeth, and is baptised shall be saved". He has not said *she* that believeth. The pronoun *he* is neither in Greek nor Latin, of the gender common to both *man* and *woman*. It is moreover unquestionable in the Holy Fathers, that circumcision is the type of baptism; and that baptism has been substituted by the new law. Now women were not circumcised according to the ancient law, consequently they ought not to be baptised under the new law. Therefore their baptism ought not to be counted valid, because we do not see in Scripture that they have been baptised in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. As St. Paul allowed circumcision to the first Christians out of complaisance, although it was proscribed by the new law, baptism was allowed

to women in the first centuries of the Church by the same complaisance. We should obey, and conform to *law* and *precepts* which are prescribed, and not to *examples*; thus the baptism of women ought to be of no consideration, and can only be regarded as an ancient custom of no importance.*

Some say that women belong to the Saviour, as well as men, since He shewed Himself first to women after His resurrection. We may retort that Christ first shewed Himself after His birth to the ox and the ass, so that He belongs also to the animals, and came into the world for them. What pitiful reasoning! We ought to be able to perceive that the only reason why Christ appeared to women first, after the resurrection was in order that His resurrection should be published on every side. We all know how women chatter, and their love of spreading abroad all that they know. Nevertheless, as in all times, their testimony has not had great weight. Christ would not make use of them as irreproachable witnesses. It is also the reason

* The baptism of women may be compared to the dead, or the baptism of the dead, of whom St. Paul speaks in the Ephesians. It was the custom in the early times of the Church, to be baptised for those friends who had died without having been baptised. In these more enlightened times the dead themselves are baptised. This practice has been crushed by the Council of Africa. Baptism in Scripture does not always mean Sacrament: an entire ablution of the body made with water is often called baptism not only by profane authors, but in Holy Scripture. The Jews baptised some days after circumcision, prostitutes, and even women, as were Sarah and Rebecca, but it was a baptism of grace.

why St. Thomas and the other Apostles would not believe in it, because they had no other proofs than the evidence of these women. Some of the Apostles even treated them with ridicule. In reality one of the women had difficulty in recognizing Christ, she took Him for a gardener and when she knew Him again, He forbade her to touch Him, which proves uncontestedly that He would not honour women by His resurrection.

Women will exclaim, We speak, we have a soul, and a share of sense, we are then human beings. We deny the inference. There are birds which speak* and Balaam's ass which was not a human being, spoke. To speak without sense is to chatter like a magpie. As a proof that women speak without sense, the Apostle forbade them to speak in the Church; why should they have been forbidden, if they spoke rationally? The law has at all times forbidden them public functions and offices; for instance they cannot hold the office of Judge, nor exercise the function of Magistrate, barrister or solicitor. Are they not excluded from these duties by reason of their incapacity or want of sense. †

* It was recently proved in a philosophical pamphlet, that animals had language. Several authors formerly had the same opinion. To try and find out the means of understanding their language would be a pretty question to propose to the Academy.

Naturalists have observed, that birds which have a flat tongue, rounded in a certain manner, have a faculty for articulating some words, such as magpies, perroquets, blackbirds, jays, etc.

† It is said in Genesis that God breathed upon the face of Adam the breath of life. All the Fathers have understood this breath of life to

We do not see in any part of the Scripture that God has given woman a soul. Many sectarians, amongst others the Anabaptists have held one opinion, and have tried to prove from Holy Writ that they have no souls.* If we grant that they have rational souls, that does not prove that they are human creatures, since the angels, and the devils, who are not of our species, also speak and are endowed with rational souls. We see with surprise that the learned Cardinal Hosius has asserted that a rational soul does not essentially constitute man.†

mean the soul. They said that God animated man by his breath, and that He put into his body a spiritual substance, independent of his body, which came immediately from God, and is in consequence, incorruptible and immortal. But did God inspire this spirit of life or soul to women? The Scripture makes no mention of it. Heidegger has observed in his history of the Patriarchs, that Moses does not speak of the soul of Eve, and that they are ignorant of the reason.

* We must grant that women have a rational soul, since we allow one to animals. It is said in Genesis, "Let the earth bring forth the souls of beasts." Arnâbe, and Luctance granted them a spiritual soul and if we may believe Rorarius hers is of a quality other than our own. The celebrated Plato granted them immortality. "Not only our souls," said he, "but also those of animals live and shall live, in a state of feeling and of action." The incomparable Grotius was so far from believing that they had no soul, that he has dared to affirm that God Himself serves them in a sort of way, as a soul.

To grant a spiritual and immortal soul to beasts, and maintain at the same time that it is different from that of man, is to sustain a Paradox, as M. Bouiller has done, in his philosophical essay on the souls of animals.

† Stanislas Hosius was one of the most illustrious of the Fathers in the Council of Trent. He has written some very clever controversial works. Casaubon accused him of having made an apology for what a controvertist has said, "that without the authority of the Church, the Holy Scriptures would have no more weight than AEsop's Fables." Was he wrong?

One is right in saying that nothing is slighter than the barrier which separates the instinct of the beast, from the reason of man; that this instinct is even an inferior soul. In reality God has sent us back again to the beasts to learn from them lessons of wisdom. It is written: "Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves," it is written in another passage: "Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise." It is only the knowledge that man has of the Supreme Being, that distinguishes him from the brutes, who have no idea of God.

If it is said that women also have that knowledge, we are forced to own that they derive it from men, for it is expressly commanded in the Holy Scripture that woman shall be instructed by her husband if she wish to know anything, and that she is not to take it into her head to teach her husband anything.* As the Divinity which has been transmitted to Jesus Christ by His Father did not form in Him His own Divinity, and make Him God, so also the knowledge of God which men transmit to their wives, does not communicate to them the real essence of the human race, and make them rational creatures.

We make small account of the last argument

* "Women," said St. Paul to Timothy, "ought to learn in silence with all subjection."

Women, says St. Chrysostom, once she begins to teach is spoilt; let her learn in silence, which according to Sophocles, is the principal ornament of women.

which can be brought against us, namely, that each animal begets an animal similar to its own species, thus the woman is of the human race, because she gives birth to men. When a male child comes into the world a father has then begotten his own species; the mother is not an efficient cause in the generation she is but an instrumental cause. Nearly all doctors agree that the rudiment of man, is in man only, that the woman only gives in generation the pleasure of physical sensation necessary to man for the propagation of his species. That she only serves to receive the small embrion, and nourish it in the matrix.* The girl who comes into the world is not an animal of the same species as its father, it is a monster according to the ideas of the Philosophers, † because nature always inclines to the best and prefers the birth of a boy to that of a girl, and

* Aristotle believes that the male only furnishes the prolific principle and that the female only provides the matter necessary for the nutrition of the foetus. Thus man only reproduces his like and the woman only keeps that which has been deposited in her. Averroes, Avicenna, and a thousand followers of Aristotle respect him too much to dispute this opinion: they deny that there is in woman any kind of prolific seed, they declare that the individual is already engendered when the woman receives it. Leuwenhoek, Hartsoeker, Valiesk, and the celebrated Boerhave have found in the sperm of the male every variety of the human race; it being filled with a prodigious quantity of small homunculi which only receive life by development.

† "Those who regard woman as an imperfect man are no doubt wrong," said the philosopher Rousseau, "though external analogy is in their favour." Males in whom the development of sex is highest are always great children but women never seem to be anything else than what they are (*Emile*). Dean Swift had also a peculiar idea about the fair sex. He looked upon women as busts more than as complete women's figures.

we ought not to be surprised at this. In the crossing of species it provides that animals resemble those that have begotten them; we can quote as example the leopard, the mule, etc.

We can prove, if we do not deceive ourselves, by several testimonies of Scripture,* that women are not of the human race, and cannot inherit eternal salvation. If we have not clearly proved that which we wish to prove, we have at least shewn in what fashion heretics twist passages of Scripture to give a resemblance of truth to their errors. We beg women to excuse our foolery, we shall believe ourselves damned as heretics if we have lost their good graces. We protest that if we are guilty it is with no wish to displease them, but simply to have beguiled our time with a harmless piece of folly.

* It must be owned that Scripture does not appear to be favourable to women. What injurious things have been written about them in the Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes; and the Holy Fathers, charitable as they were, have not behaved much better to them; their works are full of sarcasms against women. We can well say of them. "What an amount of gall is in the heart of bigots!"



CONJUGAL LOVE

Si tu veux, cher Lecteur, avoir encore l'audace
De critiquer tous mes Ecrits ;
Fais-moi paroître en quelle place
Tu dis mieux que ce que je dis.

Verbis offendi morbi aut imbecillitatis argumentatum est.

CICERO.

TABLEAU DE L'AMOUR CONJUGAL

CONJUGAL LOVE

OR, THE

PLEASURES

OF THE

MARRIAGE BED CONSIDERED

IN

SEVERAL CHAPTERS

ON

HUMAN GENERATION

FROM THE FRENCH OF VENETTE

An eminent Surgeon and Member of the Royal Academy of Paris



PARIS
CHARLES CARRINGTON

MDCCXCVIII

F O R E W O R D

Written by Dr. VENETTE in 1751

IF the works of the ancients, which treat of love, had not unfortunately been lost, either through the malice of mankind, or by the lapse of time, we should doubtless have been able by means of reading to have increased our stock of information respecting the engenderment of men, and so have removed the cause of the lamentations of the illustrious Tiraquel.

Although we no longer have this resource, our own and our friends' experience enables us to compile a work on the rules laid down by Nature for the procreation of men, and we are, consequently, independent of the writings of the men of old.

Nature, which is the Creator Himself, pervading the universe, will enlighten us on these matters, without our having to seek elsewhere. In this, we shall follow His precepts and obey His decrees. As, however, Truth and Nature are identical, we shall not seek to disguise facts, Nature and Truth being our guides throughout this work. We shall,

therefore, have no scruple in revealing Nature's secrets, and shall strive to throw light on the most obscure matters connected with the engenderment of mankind.

I am fully aware that everyone is not strong-minded enough to study with befitting attention Nature's admirable productions; that there are many weak and over-scrupulous persons, who object to everything, which is not in accordance with their own tastes, and who dislike to be differed from. They can see no charms in the nakedness of Truth, and are horrified, unless she wear a disguise. They would have Truth conceal herself under a mask. One would think they were not human beings, for they are astonished and offended at love's slightest allurements.

Primitive mankind was quite different from ourselves. They were much less scrupulous, and more reasonable, than we are. Nudity aroused in them no indecent passion. Love was under the control, and obeyed the behests, of Nature and Reason. A woman, whose rank forbade them to raise their eyes to her, was regarded as a statue. If by chance their heart was warmed by love, their passions were so restrained by their reason and fortitude that they were in no danger from a woman's charms. The nudity of a man, or woman, made no more impression than the daughters of Sparta did on the people when they danced in public, their only protection being the general

purity. This sweet reasonableness has now disappeared from among European nations, and seems to survive only among savages, who are in this respect less savage than ourselves.]

When I consider the blindness and wretchedness of man I grieve at his condition. I wonder he is not ashamed of his ignorance about himself, for he knows not whence he comes, nor how he is made. I try to ascertain if another is better instructed than myself regarding his bodily structure, and the manner in which he was borne; but I perceive from his conversation that we are both equally ignorant. On making similar enquiries of our acquaintances we find that nearly all are as much in the dark as ourselves. We happen to meet someone who explains to us the principles of procreation. He describes the members used in the act; he also explains how God has ordained that man shall increase and multiply, and speaks of the misery resulting from excess in pleasure. My friend seems ashamed of thus learning about himself and his origin. He insults the man, who instructs him as to Nature's admirable design in the generation of men. I, who perceive the finger of God, admire His commands, and submit to them.

We have been taught to name with repugnance the natural parts of either sex, that we have termed shameful, although Moses called them holy, because, if a woman touched them, her hand was cut off. We are wont too to feel disgust at them, as though,

as St. Clement of Alexandria said, God had not made them, and permitted us by His Divine and Human laws to use them.

The most indecent and abominable things can, we know, be referred to without giving offence, when spoken of in such a way as to show that we mention them reluctantly, or describe them with fitting circumspection. As the most disgraceful things are thus represented under a veil, they are looked upon as crimes, the instruments, rather than the act itself, being regarded with horror. Every thought expressed has two meanings, one plain and simple, the other merely incidental. Thus, there are some things at once honourable and dishonourable, forbidden and permitted. These incidental ideas are not always attached to words by common usage. One has to consider the author's intention, for words are but sounds, and are not in themselves indecent. If one is offended at an expression it proves a sickly mind. It was in this sense that St. Augustine wrote that if anyone saw anything unbecoming in what he had written concerning love in the matrimonial state it was no reproach to the words used by the author to express his thoughts on the generation of men. He adds that he trusts the modest reader will excuse his way of speaking in this matter. It was in this sense too that the Apostle spoke of the horrible crimes of men and women, reversing the natural usage of their privy parts, and committing offences against the laws of nature.

Persons with a knowledge of the world regard everything indifferently, considering that the world, like the sun, cannot be tarnished with spots. If this work chance to fall in their way they will read it without scruple, and will admire the manner, in which the Divinity has ordained the perpetuation of the human species. Since, however, we are engendered by love, and as love, which is termed in the Scriptures charity, is, as St. Jerome says, the strongest of all passions, such persons will find in our work how to control and dominate love; so that I doubt not but what this book will prove a help to many, including persons of great virtue.

Young men will learn to understand their own character, and their aptitude for continence, or marriage. They will be told when they ought to marry, in order not to become enervated at the outset of their career, and in order to live a long and enjoyable life. They will learn in what season, and at what time of day, they can engender, without harm to themselves, children, who will be healthy in body and mind, and who will one day be the honour and glory of their father, and props to the State. Young people when they marry think only of pleasure, and they will find in this book a description of the incurable troubles caused by an abuse of the pleasures of matrimony, in order that, being forewarned, they may know how to avoid the ills in question.

Old men will be informed up to what age one

can safely marry; and if they wish to marry and have heirs they will see how they must conduct themselves with a woman, in order to have children by her. They will see also how, when the ardour of youth is lost, they can best arouse their passions, without danger to health, and without offending the precepts of religion.

Theologians, casuists, and confessors will learn the real reasons why a marriage is valid, or should be dissolved, the vices of married couples, and the sins they commit. Everything opposed to engendermen-t is carefully examined, as well as everything contrary to God's decrees, to the laws of the married state, and the intention of the Church.

Judges will find the difficulties of Medical Jurisprudence clearly set forth, and will be enabled to distinguish for themselves the real causes of sterility, and impotence, and will not be deceived when illegitimate children are set before their eyes. Such knowledge is by its very nature above suspicion; whereas a doctor, surgeon, or midwife, whom one generally has to refer to in such matters, can be won by favour, or interest. We shall deal with the bodily defects, which afford grounds for divorce, as well as with such questions as the age when one begins and ceases to engender; as well as the real signs of pregnancy. We shall consider whether Nature has fixed a term for the delivery of women; and whether charms, magicians, or demons, can prevent married persons from the consummation of

matrimony. Finally, the reader will learn if hermaphrodites, and eunuchs, ought to marry, and if they can procreate children.

Philosophers and medical men will read with pleasure of the discoveries I have made regarding women's secret organs, and some conjectures of mine with respect to the birth of human beings, and the cause of *menses* and woman's milk; and many other details never before explained.

Mothers will learn from this work how to regulate their passions, and protect their daughters' reputation. They will be shown what dispositions are best suited for the cloister, or for marriage, and will thus be able to advise their children who will have no cause to blame them for making them adopt a calling, for which they were ill suited. Here also are treated the duties of a woman towards her husband, and how she should behave if she wishes him to preserve his health, and is not a slave to passion.

Unmarried daughters will learn what disorders love may cause, although they can themselves have no experience of the matter. The marriage tie being indissoluble it is desirable that girls should know before matrimony what troubles and worries they may have to put up with.

Even atheists, who read this work attentively, and observe without prejudice the way Nature orders the bodily functions and human frame will discover grounds for altering their opinions. I am sure no book, or argument, will testify with greater certainty

to the existence of the Deity than the passages treating of generation.

Debauchees will see the mischief and learn of the incurable maladies resulting from amorous intemperance; and, on reflection, will discover remedies to oppose to the violence of love, or to preserve health, and will control themselves more in future.

It could be wished that readers of either sex were guided by virtuous instincts, knew what love really involved, and had a thorough knowledge of life. Readers too should be of the proper age to profit by this work.

We may then consider the portrait of love, which I have painted from nature, and try to avoid the faults and crimes that are constantly committed. I have striven to reform the evil habits of rakes, and show sages the strange vagaries of love. They will be told how to preserve their health, and the best way to assure procreation.

If we admitted the objections raised by prudes we should be casting blame on the Author of the secret parts of either sex, which are daily so disgracefully abused. It would be equally just to find fault with the Creator of the Vine, with the juice of which so many daily become intoxicated. If we were to estimate the benefits and presents of Nature by the evil use, to which they are put, they would invariably deserve our censure.

We should, moreover, have to suppress most ancient and modern works. We should have to

banish from our libraries Catullus, Juvenal, Horace, and even Virgil, all of whom treat so pleasantly of love. We should have to look with horror on the works of Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Platinus and Equicola who describe the victories and triumphs of love. We ought not to read the book, which was dedicated by Jeromy Mengust, the shoemaker, to Cardinal Paleolus; nor the works of Father Sprenger concerning the abominable conjunctions of sorcerers and devils during Sabbaths; nor the Book of Love by Cammius Nobilis, one of the greatest theologians of his day, who was the first to edit the Bible in Latin, by order of Pope Sixtus V; and subsequently thought it an honourable and worthy task to compose this treatise, which he considered his masterpiece. We should have to cast into the flames all the casuists, who so fully instruct us in such matters; and Father Sanchez, the author of an important work on the secrets existing between married persons, would not be free from blame. None should read St. Augustine, St. Gregory of Nice, nor Tertullian, for they all speak of conjugal love in terms I could render only by a paraphrase.

With respect to medicine and anatomy I shall expose the popular errors of Joubert, who treats of the action of the secret parts of both sexes, and who ventured to dedicate the work to Marguerite de Navarre, grandmother of Henry the Great of glorious memory. Ambroise Paré and Du Laurens have written of the generation of men, and M.

Mauriceau's work on the *accouchement* of women contains plates that are so realistic as to seem almost indecent. Books are openly sold treating of the passions, and the most tender movements of love are painted in vivid colours. Works by Bodin, the lawyer, and Delancre, Conseiller in the Parliament of Bordeaux, describe the abominations committed by sorcerers during the Sabbath. The *Roman de la Rose et du Bourdon*, by Jean de Menu, is still offered for sale by booksellers. Poems and satires, and plays by our poets are sold everywhere; and the most Holy of Books is in the hands of nearly every woman. Such being the case, I do not think anyone can object to my treating in my own mother tongue of the questions here dealt with.

I know some persons are so susceptible that they cannot see any object connected with love, or read any book treating of the subject, without being tempted to commit even a crime. I can only advise such persons to avoid the conversation of men, or dwell in a desert, or other solitary spot; so they may avoid hearing anything to shock them, or any remarks concerning sexual intercourse.

I admit that if we could avoid being moved by the gentle passion, or hinder others from feeling its effects, I should be wrong to issue this work to the world. Love, however, is a passion, which greatly affects us, whether we will, or no; and I think, therefore, one should rather praise than blame a book, which teaches moderation, and the means

to preserve health, while putting the public on their guard against love's tricks; for it is but human prudence, or as the Fathers of the Church termed it, *Prudentia Carnis*, to preserve one's health by a moderate use of the pleasures of marriage.

It is not only from books that we learn what we ought to be ignorant of. A bad example, or evil conversation, often does more harm. It cannot be said that I have advocated the abuse of love. I have described illicit pleasures, in order to warn people against them, for they cause loss of health and render impossible the perpetuation of species. I have not written this treatise to teach Nature how to do her work, nor with a view to regulate the action of the genital parts of either sex. The matter was long ago brought to perfection by the simple forces of Nature. Science has no say in the matter. The most ignorant persons, and mere clods, are masters in this respect. My intention has been merely to describe the moderation, which should be exercised in the pleasures of love, so that they may be long and often enjoyed. I doubt not that if this book is judged only by the chapter headings, it will appear immodest to ill educated persons, or those who have a bad disposition, and an ill balanced mind. If, however, my work be perused and judged without prejudice, the Divine Wisdom will doubtless be admired, in that It has inclined the heart of man to love, for the perpetuation of the race.

Everyone, however, is not capable of fitly judging my book, which resembles a picture, the merits of which are concealed from many. To correctly judge a work of art one must have studied painting, and view it from the right standpoint. Some persons look at a picture too closely, or from too great a distance; from too high, or too low, an elevation; and their judgment is, therefore, bad. Moreover ignorant persons are incapable of judging, as are also those who have merely heard the matter spoken of, or are prejudiced.

There are thus three kinds of persons, who pose as judges. The first, speaking in pure ignorance, repeat parrot-like that the work deserves to be burnt by the public executioner. The second, the *savants*, form a just opinion, or remain silent, while they admire the rules of Nature, and God's precepts for the engenderment of man. The third class, who have but a little knowledge, say my book is pernicious; they affect great learning, annoy everyone, and are the worst possible judges. They are jaundiced, and think it is I who am yellow. To tell the truth, all have not the gift of criticism. A good critic must possess an evenly balanced mind, good taste and common sense, all rare qualities. Thus Quintilian tells us that in his day Lucretius was more admired than Virgil, although in comparison with Virgil he scarcely deserves the name of poet. I could not wish for a better excuse for my book than the *Apology* written by Théophile

Renaud in favour of his compatriot Father Sanchez, who wrote on marriage much as I have done.

No preacher has discoursed in more vigorous language than I, nor with greater zeal, on the need for a moderate use of the pleasures of marriage, and the evil consequences of licentiousness. No one has opposed more strenuously the excesses of love, nor taught more certain means of protecting oneself from its attractions. Let the unbiassed reader peruse these pages attentively, and he will see beyond doubt, that my whole aim has been to show the beauty of Virtue and the utter ugliness of Vice, to extol the one and to flagellate the other.

How ill one judges, if he forms an opinion merely from appearances! When we bear in mind that Lot had amorous connection with his daughters; that Samson performed prodigious feats; that David committed adultery; that Thamar prostituted herself; might one not think such matters dishonourable, abominable and unworthy of mention in the Holy Scriptures!

I trust my book will not be condemned without being read, as happened to the works of St. Thomas and Roger Bacon, who were regarded as magicians merely from the titles of their books. I trust too people will not listen to the reports of my enemies, nor to the malice of ignorant persons, for there are more foolish men in the world, whose attention is arrested by grotesque sketches, than wise men, who love to contemplate the beauties of Nature. After

all if the work is considered to be a bad one I do not object to its being found fault with, or even burnt, as Nero burnt the Satires of Fabricius Vejento and the Roman Senate the works of Cremmus Cordus.

Why, however, should I be surprised at malicious criticisms of my book? Have not the most perfect works been criticised with the utmost envy, bitterness, and hate? It has been said that Homer often nodded and was full of faults. That Demosthenes did not satisfy his readers. That Cicero borrowed from the Greeks, the supposed plagiarisms being instanced. That he was cowardly and timid; that his speeches were full of digressions and tedious periods, and that he was not easily enough moved. That the elder Seneca was disconnected. That Pliny the historian accepted everything without judgment, and digested nothing. That Virgil was without wit, and stole others' thoughts. That Horace lacked honesty, and that his verse was like prose. That St. Ambrose's Commentaries on St. Luke were nonsense. Envy, in fact, does not attack a man's reputation, but the individual himself.

However this may be, I was desirous when I wrote this book to have as many judges as readers. I do not fear criticism, which is not hard to bear, and which an author naturally expects.

Finally, I could not help writing this book in the way I have done. I shall be very glad if my work is appreciated by a few learned persons. I shall

ever prefer them to the vulgar herd, which often misinterprets the truth. This was doubtless the meaning of the Sage, who wrote that the opinion of the populace was often the opinion of fools, and the intention of Horace was similar when he composed the Ode beginning *Odi profanum vulgus et arceo*¹. If thou wishest, Reader, to criticise my writings, tell me where you have yourself better treated the subject.

¹ *I hate the common folk, and will have nought to do with them.*



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CONJUGAL LOVE
OR THE
PLEASURES
OF THE
MARRIAGE BED CONSIDERED

CHAPTER I.

Of the Parts of Man, ministering to Generation—Procreation of Children, and other miscellaneous Observations.

THE benevolent Author of our being, when he placed our first parent in his happiest situation, "saw that it was not good he should be alone;" therefore he created him a partner after his own image; but sweeter, softer, and fairer, and endowed with more graces than Adam, and partaking more of the angelic nature, she claimed a more exalted origin. For, though he was formed out of a *virgin earth*, which had never served for any production, and drew his breath immediately from the inspiration of his Maker, yet the rising from his

very substance was more refined; and being of a higher and nobler original, better able to contribute with purity towards the work of generation.

The wisdom of God appears not more in any part of the formation of man, than it does in the construction and fitness of that portion of the human system, ministering to the propagation of the species; for, considering their union, proportion, figure, and action; and also the spirits that are fluent in those regions; the pleasure that resides there, and the exquisite texture of the whole, we must admire and adore; and own, the "hand that formed us is divine."

Man's form and structure wisely were design'd,
A noble feat for an immortal mind:
His face erect, th' Almighty's works to view,
And thro' each scene the mighty plan pursue.
How aptly fitted all his members are,
The eye, the ear, the hand, the foot, declare
A mutual sympathy in each unites,
And all to joy and happiness excites;
In ev'ry part with wond'rous beauty fraught,
A microcosm in narrow compass wrought:
His Maker's image, and his Maker's care,
To endless glories, an adopted heir.

A lovely creature next demands the line,
'Tis beauty's self, where all the graces shine; . .
'Tis man refin'd, and such a blaze of arms,
That victors at her feet resign their charms.
Ev'n kings themselves, their sceptres too lay down,
And to a woman bend—her empire own.
If we survey the sex with curious eye,
Not two alike we anywhere descry:
They differ all, yet please and entertain,
For beauties numberless among them reign.

Who varies thus man's principal delights,
 And gay desires in his breast excites?
 This healing balm of life was kindly giv'n,
 To sooth each anxious care, and fit for heav'n.
 Blest with such beauty, so divinely fair;
 That well may she in his affections share.
 Her form, how pleasant! what angelic grace
 Dwells in each feature of her comely face;
 Her eyes as sparkling as her aspect sweet,
 Where love, all-conquering love, has chose his seat.
 Say, unbeliever, who this piece design,
 Or made the fair one in such lustre shine,
 That you, ev'n you, who nought besides adore,
 Yet here confess, and own her wond'rous pow'r.
 'Twas heav'n's last work, as if it meant to own,
 It should, of all creation, be the crown:
 Could jumbling atoms e'er in dance unite,
 And form for man this exquisite delight?
 As well may flying dust together join,
 And mould a being charming and divine.

In order to understand clearly the circumstances which heighten the joys of love, we must consider the parts separately, as they belong to either man or woman:

Ye Parents now, who all these joys have known,
 Assist me, and unloose the virgin zone;
 With me to cheer the fearful maiden strive,
 And tell her she may see the morn alive:
 For now the spouse, impatient for delight,
 Warms with the thought, and struggles for the fight.
 "Let us engage," he cries, "nor longer stay,
 "And waste the hours of love in dull delay:
 "Why should we not the happy combat prove,
 "Free as we are, and give a loose to love?"

It is observable, that the ancients ranked the *virile member* among the number of their gods, under the

names of *Fascinus* and *Priapus*, to intimate the empire and dominion it had always possessed in the world. In these latter ages, as well as in former, people have held that part in great veneration, because it is the father of human kind, and the origin of the rest of the parts we are composed of. *Vilandre*, as the History of France relates, committed high treason in touching the privy parts of Charles the Ninth with his hands. The law of the Old Testament orders the woman's hand to be cut off, that should scornfully or injuriously have handled this distinctive criterion of our species; and he was not deemed fit to serve at the altar, who had any imperfection in this important member.

Considering this part together, 'tis apt to be taken for one piece; but being examined separately, 'tis found to be covered with a little loose skin, and with another somewhat thicker, furnished with veins and arteries, as also encompassed with a fleshy membrane, which shuts up like a case all the parts that compose the *verge*. Its substance is neither solid nor bony. If it had been of the same nature with that of dogs and wolves, there would have been great disorders in the several adventures of men and women; and there would have been no occasion for witnesses to make out a rape, if the party had hung by this part.

The testicles are shut up in a purse. From these, nature draws forth matter for performing miracles every day in the production of men. These parts

evidence manhood and strength; and it was not allowable formerly, in the courts of justice, at Rome, for any man to bear witness against another, except his testicles were entire.

Every man has commonly two testicles: if one is disordered, withered, or wounded, the other may minister to *generation*. Some have naturally but one, as the *Syllas Cottas*, etc., but then nature shuts up in this one part all that ought to be contained in both. 'Tis more frequent for people to have three or four testicles than one. And observations of physicians take notice, that there are few kingdoms but what furnish some families of men that have three testicles; but these have not the advantage of the former; because, instead of being more fertile by the number of these parts, they become impotent, the prolific virtue being distributed in too many parts to be of any force. Agathocles, King of Sicily, knew well enough, that a great number of testicles was not the fittest for generation, whatever they might be for lust and pleasure, and that 'twas better to be furnished with one or two than to have more.

If man, says an ancient philosopher,* had his testicles in his belly, there would not be a more lascivious creature in the universe; therefore, to avoid the disorders of lasciviousness, nature has placed them outwardly, to receive impressions of the injuries of the air. But this opinion is contro-

* Aristotle.

verted by the moderns. It may be said, that this does not hinder man from being the most lascivious of creatures, because he is disposed for the delights of love, at every hour, and in every season; whereas most other creatures wait for certain periods of time. Most children have their testicles hidden in the belly; and excepting some few, they seldom appear before the age of eight or ten years, the heat of the blood then beginning to be vigorous, pushes out those parts that before were hidden in children. There are several children whose testicles come down very late, and in some they never come down at all, and then one would take them to be eunuchs, if they had no other proof to induce us to believe them perfect. The Lady Argenton would never have called her husband's ability in question, if she had met with testicles in his purse: nor could they have justified his fruitfulness by all the proofs they had, if Ambrose Paré had not found his testicles in his belly after his decease. And the Lapidary, mentioned by Kerchrингius, Obs. 13, would not have sung so strongly, had not his testicles been hidden in his belly; for they fell down when he was eighteen years of age, after the fit of a fever.

For all that Hippocrates says, there is no reason to believe his position, viz., that the right testicle is hotter than the left, and also that it engenders males, the other females; experience and reason oblige me to be of a different sentiment from that physician;

for we know that the seed mixing together, when 'tis sallying out, the effect, we perceive, cannot be attributed more to one testicle than another, but rather to the man's and woman's body, as we shall examine more at large in the sequel; but in truth, neither the one nor the other produces a male sooner than a female. Witness what Gassendi relates of a man, who had caused one testicle to be cut out, yet got children afterwards of both sexes.

The testicles are closely covered with two membranes, one very hard to the point of a lancet; their substance is a clew of spermatic vessels, which one may term the end of the preparing and beginning of the ejaculatory ones. It is made of an infinite number of small ramifications, which are store-houses of the seminal matter that is made from the arterial blood, filtrated out of the spermatic artery, through a thousand small conduits, and a nervous juice that slides in amongst it through several little windings. Some philosophers, and after them some physicians, will not allow the seed to be formed in the testicles; because, say they, they have no sensible cavities, and no passage for the matter to be brought through; as also that these parts being cold, a spirituous matter cannot be connected in them; that, in the dissection of the testicles, no seed can be perceived; that there are creatures that have no testicles, and engender nevertheless. Finally, that we are assured, by some observations, that men, who have been deprived of these parts, have

got children, notwithstanding this loss. All these reasons appear very strong to those that only examine things in the books of authors: for if we search for the truth thereof by dissection, and other better reasons, we shall soon be of another opinion.

'Tis known that the spermatic arteries go directly to the testicles, and dividing in two branches, bring the blood to the *epididymis*, and body of the testicles. Besides, 'tis known that the nerves, which spring from the sixth pair, and those that slip off the nerves from the lower part of the back bone, communicate to the testicles a spirituous matter proper for generation.

There are two sorts of vessels fastened to the extremities of the testicles; the one brings matter to elaborate the seed, the other brings back the seed ready made: and afterwards, according to the opinion of anatomists, discharge themselves into the small *cellules*, or store-houses at the root of the yard, called seed-vessels.

One may compare these small *cellules* to the cavities of a pomegranate, when the seed is taken out. Here the seed is preserved for several embraces, and different generations.

I have often had the curiosity to press those little bladders, and small glandules that are found near them, with my fingers, to make the seed come forth; and notwithstanding the coldness of the corpse, I have perceived a white and pretty thickish liquor filter through a membrane near a little wart,

and afterwards to pour out in the urinary and seed passage.

As the acorn contains the seed of the future oak, so does the human *homunculus* contain the future man, which is to flourish, to amuse, to rule, or instruct his fellow beings. St. Paul understood this, when he observed that all mankind paid tythes to Melchisedec in the loins of Abraham, when that patriarch met that famous High Priest.





CHAPTER II.

Of the Parts of Woman ministering to Generation.

AFTER having diligently examined the parts of Man, which serve for generation, we shall consider those of the Woman; and at the same time admire nature in forming them, and her marvellous contrivance in their order and disposition. Nature is wonderful in all her works, and produces nothing without design. The hair begins to point forth at fourteen or fifteen years; at which time the soul is able to distinguish virtue from vice; and consequently *Nature* puts a *veil* upon the privy parts of both sexes, to signify that honesty and modesty ought there to establish their chief abode.

The privy parts of a Woman, by some called *Nature*, because all men owe their origin to them, are the cause of most of (our) sorrows, as well as our pleasures; and most of the revolutions that have ever happened in the world, or happen at this time, spring from the same source. Only read Petronius, and the eight years' history which he has written of Nero's debauched court, and I do not,

question but every one will be persuaded of the truth of what I say.

The *labia* or lips are only folds which are almost like a young cock's comb; and whose wrinkles betoken age, as well as those in the countenance. When women grow old, or else have been great prostitutes, the folds called *nymphæ* cause the noise that attends a woman's evacuation of urine, which would doubtless surprise us if we were not used to it. According to the opinion of some authors, there is a part above the *nymphæ* longer more or less than half a finger, called by anatomists *clitoris*; the which I may justly term the fury and rage of love; there Nature has placed the seat of pleasure and lust, as it has on the other hand in the *glans* of man: there it has placed those excessive ticklings, and there is lechery and lasciviousness established; for, in the action of love, the *clitoris* fills with spirits, and afterwards stiffens as a man's *virge*, which part it also resembles. One may see its pipes, its nerves, and muscles: neither is there a *glans* or *prepuce* wanting; and if it was hollow through, one would say 'twas altogether like a man's member.

This part lascivious women often abuse. The *Lesbian Sappho* would never have acquired such indifferent reputation, if this part of hers had been less. I have seen a girl eight years of age, that had already the *clitoris* as long as one's little finger; and if this part grows with age, as 'tis

probable it may, I am persuaded it is now as long as that of the woman (mentioned by Platerus) who had one as big and as long as the neck of a goose.

Though this part swells to the degree spoken of during life in some women, when love sends spirits thither, yet the trouble one is at to meet with it in dead ones, would be incredible, were not experience on my side: so that it may be allowed for truth, that the parts are not in the same condition during life; and after death sometimes it happens, though very seldom, that nature being willing to preserve the womb of some tender woman, produces a membrane below the urinary passage, that air or other extraneous matter may not disorder the interior parts; and this membrane is properly called *hymen*, or the true maidenhead. It is full of veins, and commonly bored through the middle to give way to the terms and entrance of the seed. Anatomists have sometimes taken the *caruncles* joined together by small membranes for the *hymen*.

Among all the parts of a Woman that serve for generation, the womb ought to be first named; and though 'tis one of the weakest parts, yet the treasures of nature are deposited in it: *It is the land where Diogenes used to plant men*, and where he immortalized himself without being ashamed in the middle of the streets.

It is situated below the belly between the bladder and the strait gut, which serve for cushions to the most fierce and unruly creature, while he continues

in his mother's womb: 'tis pretty large in middle-sized women, that are used to be often kissed: its depth is eight inches, or thereabouts, from the entrance to the bottom; but 'tis very small in virgins and old women, for the most part no bigger than a horse bean, or pigeon's egg. In short, in these latter, it is nothing but a hard-withered skin or bag.

A bottle gives a pretty just idea of the figure of the womb, with this difference, that it is something flatter when empty; its ligaments keep it knit to the lower belly, that it cannot be shaken without violence: its neck ties it below, and the ligaments fastened to the groins and inner parts of the thighs, hinder it from launching upwards in those suffocations, that so often trouble women by reason of these two ligaments. Breeding women are made sensible of cruel pains in their loins, and inside of the thighs; but as the womb cannot rise, so neither can it fall, except it be through some extraordinary effort; for 'tis tied above by two firm and large ligaments that resemble *bats' wings*. There the testicles are placed, and the vessels that bring the blood to the womb, by means of those ligaments; the womb is hindered from falling out of its place through the heaviness of the child, or by the violent efforts of travail; so that this part cannot possibly move out of the place nature has put it in, as the ancients would make us believe. Tied it is, not only by the aforesaid parts, but by a great number of arteries, veins, and nerves, that terminate in it.

It stands also instead of ligaments, and the membranes which encompass and constringe it, hinder its going out of its place. We observe two vessels that stand somewhat out from the rest, on the two sides of the womb, which Diocles stiled the *horns*, because they bear some resemblance to horns in beasts. The neck of the womb is one of the most considerable parts; 'tis the gate of modesty; and, according to common experience, the sheath of a man's member; and it is naturally winding, to keep off what may be hurtful to the womb from abroad, and also to give greater pleasure to a man when he caresses his wife.

Whenever this part begins to feel the pleasure of love, 'tis put in such an agitation, that being of a nervous substance, and full of folds, it widens and straightens as occasion requires. The womb, according to Plato, is an animal that is extraordinarily moved, when it passionately loves or hates any thing; its instinct is surprising, when it approaches a man's member, in order to draw from it, where-with to moisten and procure itself pleasure.

Its principal action is conception; the seed of man is thrown into its folds; it receives it as a good mother (*matrix*) according to its name in Latin: It sits upon the seed with a moderate and gentle heat, in order to produce, in due time, of this animated seed, one of the finest creatures nature ever attempted, which we shall more particularly examine in the third book. The womb has also

other uses, particularly the voiding of superfluous blood, and discharging such impurities as may prove offensive to women. It is not to be imagined, though some will have it so, that this blood may come to acquire a poisonous quality; on the contrary, 'tis commonly pure and fine; and only through superfluouslyness and plenty, are caused those monthly flowings from the arteries of the womb.

Of the Human Seed.

SEED is a whitish humour, turgid with spirits, bred in the stones, and *prostate glands*, and further elaborated for generation in the carrying vessels, and the small seminal bladders. The matter of it is blood, carried on both sides, from the trunk of the *aorta*, in a strait passage by the arteries to the stones, and there put off through the small glands that are only visible by a microscope upon the tubulous substance of the stones. This is confirmed by the artificial division and dispersion of the arteries in the stones, and *prostate glands*, and by the straitness of them, together with the wreathing of the corresponding veins, and the multitude of valves; for these are so framed, that the blood may pass quicker to the stones, than from them, and that the nobler part of the blood may the easier sweat through to the tubulous substance of the stones from the small glands and arteries everywhere joined to it, for the making of seed. Moreover, it appears hence, viz., because those that are of a sanguine complexion abound most with seed.

But some will have the nervous juice to be the matter of it; for these reasons, because they perceive many nerves in the testicles, and that the taking away of a great quantity of blood does not so much weaken a man, as the loss of a little seed; and that after coition the head aches; and that such as are given to venery are subject to distillations from the brain on the spinal marrow. And lastly, because the testicles are white, not red. To the first I answer, that the nervous juice is either animal spirit condensated, or another humour: but the nature of a spirit which hath particles that quickly fly away, cannot condensate into a seminal humour, and the nervous juice can be no other humour; for if it were, it would stop the passage of the nerves. To the second I answer, this is manifest to sense, and they convey a great many spirits, which ought to be in the seed, without which the blood could not pass through those innumerable and narrow tubes which are in the testicles, nor be changed into prolific seed, which ought to be made by the various motion of the spirits, and the particles of it, and the working of them among themselves. To the third, fourth, and fifth, I answer, that it may be easily understood that this happens only by the loss of animal spirits; for the testicles being emptied, the nerves proportionably, at least those which are near, are also emptied; and then, by reason of the greater facility of the motion towards them, spirits flow more abundantly into them; and so the other

parts, and also the brain, are robbed; and upon this account the fibres are disordered, and the brain becoming cold, condenses the vapours, and puts them off on the spine. To the sixth I answer, that all the parts and the testicles also are nourished with blood, and yet all are somewhat white.

Seed begins to be generated about puberty, because the heat of the glands of the testicles being then greater, opens more the arteries and small vessels, and drives the blood better through them, and the nerves are readier to carry spirits.

The seed is of an ashy colour in the tubes of the testicles, but whiter in the head of the *epididymis*. It is made in the testicles and *prostate glands*, and is conveyed by the carrying vessels by a very small and winding duct to the seminal bladders, wherein it is kept, and further elaborated, till by titillation, the nerves and fibres about the sides of them being much inflated, press out the seed, which is then very turgid with spirit, into the urethra, through the holes of the gland that stops the seminal bladders.

The stones are the shop of the seed, and therefore eunuchs have not seed, but some titillation they have, by reason of a certain humour that drops from the *prostate glands* into the urethra; but this is not true seed: and yet eunuchs may have seed in the seminal vessels sufficient for copulation once or twice, and may impregnate a woman.

Those which do not indulge themselves in venery,

and live chastely, do not generate much seed, for the passages are narrowed by degrees, and the seminal matter turns back, and nourishes and makes fat the loins and other parts.

Women have prolific seed; if by that you understand the eggs whereof their testicles are full, which being made fruitful, and expanded by the man's seminal air, break out of the cups wherein they are chiefly contained, into the *fallopian tubes*, and from thence into the cavity of the womb.

That humour which women emit in copulation, is not true seed, because that is ejected without, about the clitoris and orifice of the privities, and never into the womb. This is manifest in big-bellied women, the orifice of whose womb is always close shut, and covered with a yellow mucilage. And besides, many women conceive, and yet, as they say, have not emitted that humour. Moreover, it has seldom the consistence of seed, nor is it spirituous, because whores copulating often in a day, are not weakened by the excretion of it, nor is it elaborated as seed; for it is not generated in the organs of it, but in the glands.

The furrows of the womb emit this humour, or certain ducts opening into the sheath from the *prostate*, or other glands of the womb, by reason of titillation, and the constriction of the fibres of the womb, which happens in coition.

And yet this humour is profitable, because it perpetually moistens the sheath and perhaps it conduces

to the elevation of the man's seminal spirit or air from the sheath to the cavity of the womb, and from thence to the eggs to make them fruitful.

Menstruous blood is blood abounding in the body, which is evacuated by the womb monthly.

The chief cause is the abounding of the blood at a certain time; heat, and the easy dilatation of the womb, also help. That a plenitude is the cause may be proved; for they that have most blood, evacuate most this way; and then rustic women, that consume much blood by labour, have little or no menstrual flux; and those who have lost much blood by venefaction, have few or no courses at all. Men also, who do not abound with blood, by reason of labour and more heat, have no such flux. But there are some women who monthly evacuate blood by the nostrils, hemorrhoids, or other parts. Those women that are hot have their courses sooner, but in less quantity, and not so long as those that are cold.

Some say the cause of the courses is a certain saline ferment of the womb, being gradually deposited on the substance of it, whereby the womb collecting much fire in itself, is turgid, rarefied, and dilated, grows hot, and evacuates the more fluid blood, until that ferment is carried off; and this ferment, they say, is manifest from those things which move the courses, for they consist of much volatile salt.

According to these causes, the courses begin to

flow about the fourteenth year, because the body then having in a manner its due magnitude, the blood begins to abound, and be luxuriant in the womb and other parts: and hence the breasts grow big, the womb is less wrinkled, and does not press its arteries so much, and a greater heat exagitates the blood more violently, dilates the arteries, and opens them.

The courses ordinarily stop about the fiftieth year. partly by the defect of blood and heat, and partly upon the account of the narrowness and dryness of its passages.





CHAPTER III.

Of the Act of Generation.

GENERATION is a production of nature, whereby one living creature is formed in the similitude of another.

Generation is performed in the following manner: The virile seed is injected into the sheath of the womb, and from thence is elevated a certain seminal air or spirit, which flies through the inner mouth of the womb, to the bottom of it, and thence to the *fallopian tubes*, and so to the testicles or *ovaria* of the woman. Some think that the most spirituous portion of the seed is imbibed by the substance of the womb, and so conveyed with the blood, to the *ovaria*, to fecundate them; but our way is the easier and shorter; at the same time the woman, by reason of pleasure and titillation, is wont to emit a certain serous humour, which may conduce to conception, though it be not seed, by diluting and rarifying the virile seed, and by rendering the separation of the seminal spirit more easy, by elevating it to the *ovaria*; and so the seminal air being raised from

the virile seed, that which is gross remains in the sheath, is dissipated and slides out: that we are generated by this seminal air, and not by gross seed, may be proved by superfœtation, or new conception, in those that are with child; for in such the mouth of the womb is close shut, so that nothing but a spirit can pass. Moreover, this may be proved by some that generate, though by reason of the brevity and debility of the *penis*, never cast their seed into the bottom of the womb, which certainly could not be, if the air alone of it were not sufficient for generation; and do we not see that a cock generates without the ejection of seed, and merely, as I may say, by touching the fundament of the hen with a moistened *penis*? and yet this place is far distant from the *ovaria* in a hen; what therefore can conduce to the breeding of eggs, may consequently prove the same to the generation of men? This feminal air, therefore, being conveyed from the bottom of the womb through the *fallopian tubes*, into the *ovaria*, there insinuates itself into one egg or more, as they are nearer to its entrance, or more disposed to receive and nourish it. And hence it is, why all the eggs are not fecundated at once, and ordinarily but a few; and why not always at the first congress. The eggs are best fecundated, when a woman is nearest the time of her courses, by reason of the greater porosity of her womb and testicles, whereby the seminal air is the easier received into the eggs. The eggs are contained in

membranous cups like acorns, and indeed very loosely, so that they may be expelled out of them by the breath only. The fecundated egg being turgid and rarefied by the feminal spirit, can no longer contain itself in its cup, but falls from it of its own accord into the *fallopian tube*; and from thence, by a successive constriction of all the fibres, it is forced into the bottom of the womb.





CHAPTER IV.

Of the Effects, and final End of the Passion of Love.

OF a Man, the desire of his eyes is towards the Woman; and the Woman, in the same manner, is turned to the Man. The final end and catastrophe of the most exalted and sublime passion, must end in the certain action appointed by nature for the multiplication of mankind. The mutual relation of the sexes incline them locally to embrace.

The desire of the male is situated in his loins; and the lust of the Woman has its foundation in her navel. So says Job, "his virtue is in his loins, " and her desire in her navel." The Gospel has a passage relating to this also: "Let your loins be "girded, and your lamps be burning in your hand." Men are most apt for the company of Women in winter and in spring; women most desirous of commerce with man in summer and in autumn; and this proceeds from the contrary complexion, in respect both to the times and persons; which complexion is nothing else than the different mixtures of warmth with cold, and moisture with dryness.

We also say, that copulation cannot be effectual, unless there be an ability, and fitness of disposition in the members of generation. A man hath his vessels of generation without the body; a woman hers within it. Nor are the vessels wherein the seed of the female is contained, altogether like those of the male: from these vessels her seed is ejected, and by the exuberance of it, she is moved to copulation.

This seed is called by the Greeks *Sperma*, and receives its original from the radical moisture of the whole body; but more particularly from those parts where heat is most predominant.

The moisture from whence the seed is derived into every nerve, vein, and artery, is the most refined and noblest part of the human frame, containing, in itself, the whole nature and complexion of every part of the body; or in other words, being the very essence of man.

But here we must observe, that the seed of a man is more hot and strong than the seed of a woman; according to the quantity of which prolific seed (which is ejected into the womb of the mother in the time of copulation), the dispositions, dimensions, etc., of the child, is entirely owing. Neither, if the womb of the mother be of a healthful temperature, can the seed ever be cast into it in vain.

But to be a little more particular upon this head: if the seed be ejected lengthways into the womb, the child will be lean and tall; if otherwise, it will

be thick and short. This sperma, or seed, is the *materia prima*, or first matter, in the creation of an infant. It is, as I said before, the noblest part of the blood of man or woman, which is, by agitation, converted into a white clammy substance; and this being more light and more active than the part remaining, doth therefore ascend.

It is observable, that where, in the act of generation, there is more of the seed of the man than the woman, the child so conceived, shall resemble the father in the face and skin, and probably in the sex. I myself knew two extraordinary examples of this; one of a woman of a very fair complexion, who, being pregnant by a blackamoor, brought forth a white child. And again, of a negro woman, who conceiving by a white man, brought forth a child totally black.

Certain it is, that if the woman be young, and, in the act of copulation, be mindful of her husband, or some other friend, the child shall resemble that person then thought on: the truth of which has been proved a thousand times. *

But when the seed issues in the act of generation, there at the same time arises an extraordinary titillation and delight in all the members of the body, according to the condition and quantity of the seed, and of the vessel from whence it proceeds: for the pleasure is a great deal more poignant, when the seed flows from the right vessel of genera-

* Letters on the force of imagination in pregnant women.

tion, than when it issues from the left. The pleasure is also greater from much seed than little. There are certain meats by which the seed is increased, as radishes, pullets, pigs, veal, new-laid eggs, and the like: there are others also which dry up the prolific moisture of the body, hard cheese, and things that are bitter or sour to the palate. Again, there are some meats provoke lust, as oysters, crabs, prawns, erringoies, potatoes, sweet wine, and some sort of electuaries.

But above all, the beauty of the face, and the handsomeness of the body, in the harmonious proportion of its members, most powerfully excites us to love. If a young man beholds a virgin of a blooming complexion, and agreeable carriage; or if a youth of a lusty make, or comely countenance, is seen by a girl, there is a secret desire, which from the eyes conveys wishes to the heart: In a word, man and woman, like a loadstone, have an attracting virtue, and a mutual desire for each other. From seeing, they must proceed to touching; and as from the steel and flint there sparkles fire, so from the mutual conjunction of their bodies, there follows a conception; and the womb of the woman is the mould where the child is formed.

I must beg leave however to observe, that, in the act of copulation, it seldom happens, that both the man and the woman eject their seed from both their vessels of generation; and by reason of this, there is commonly but one conception: for if at

any time they should both shed their seed from both their vessels of generation, and it should be diffused into both sides of the womb, there would not only be one, but many children got, according to the diffusion of the seed in the womb; and the womb, consisting of seven cells, or crispatures (as appears from anatomy of dissected women),* there may be seven children at once in the womb of the mother.

* Hunter's *Gravid Uterus.*





CHAPTER V.

Of the Age of Puberty both in Man and Woman, and of the Dangers and Inconveniences arising from Excess in, as well as a total Abstinence from the Act of Copulation.

THE time when nature is ripe for the act of copulation in man is pretty uncertain, though for the most part youths begin to find themselves inclined, and able, to enjoy the female sex at about sixteen years of age. And this desire and ability continues in some measure till they are about seventy.

In woman it is sooner; the generality of girls are fit for commerce with man at thirteen years old; and, for the most part, they leave off child-bearing before sixty.

In these tender years the seed begins to have its course: the hairs in the body begin to shew themselves at the privities, and under the arm-pits of women; at the same time they are also seen in the nostrils, on the cheeks, and chins of young men; and indeed, all their bodies over; for as leaves shoot forth in the time of spring, so, at this season, the pores of the body, being first opened, produce

something resembling them. The voice likewise changes; the breasts of virgins begin to fill; and, in a word, both sexes seek lust to each other, and sometimes so violently inflame, that unless they are restrained by fastings, and other mortifications, it is impossible to keep them chaste.

It is observed, that after the act of generation, the hair of the head grows darker and darker; the hair of the face is considerably altered; the skin becomes of a rougher grain: and there is a vast difference both in the manners and the mind.

But though the act of copulation is enjoined both by the laws of God and man, and nature itself instigates us to it, in regard to the exquisite satisfaction which the wise disposer of all things has providentially ordered should result to us from it: yet, if a man too far indulges himself in those pleasures, and especially in his youth gives way to frequent coition, it will cross his present health, debilitate his generative faculties, and entirely subvert his constitution, by drying up the moisture of the body, and damping that genial warmth so necessary towards the human procreation.

But the brain, and the eyes especially, are very sensible of the great inconveniences that arise from excessive venery. In consequence of it, the brain will melt like ice before the fire, the eyes will grow dim and rheumy, the head will ache in the morning, and be afflicted with frequent megrims. Add too, that the whole strength of the body will be greatly

enfeebled and diminished, in as much as the seed is specifically the vigour thereof.

A person, if lean before, will now grow more so: the sight, as I have already observed, will be weakened; but these are not the worst consequences, the spirits are lowered, the appetite lost, and the memory obstructed. In a word, a man in this miserable circumstance, becomes slow in action, heavy in gait, dull in his conversation, stupid in his apprehension, unadvised in his labour, and apt to believe every thing; the hair of the head will fall off, or grow quickly grey; he will be bald in the fore part, and crown of his head; his body will be suddenly infected by any corruption of the air; and to sum up all, his life will be shortened two-thirds of its date.

Now the contrary of this is observable in young men and women, who have not yet lost their virginity. But as some exceptions may apparently offer, in the persons both of male and female youths, who having never known either man or woman, are frequently seen in the deplorable situation above described, I answer, they have reduced themselves to it, by that unnatural effeminacy, called self-pollution, which is the bane and destruction of all those who exercise themselves in so beastly a practice.

But to speak with regard to the conduct of the Marriage Bed. We often see women, who while they were maids (that is to say, before they knew man), were the most lively and alert imaginable,

that afterwards became the direct opposite; grew thoughtful, and dronish; their hair becomes thin, and their complexion yellow.

They are at a loss to account for this extraordinary change; but let them ask their own hearts, have not they given too great a loose to their desire of conjugal embraces? have not they tasted too freely of the nuptial pleasure? They have: by which means the animal spirits are exhausted; the fibres too much relaxed; and they fall a victim to their own wantonness.

The same thing happens to the husband in this case; he pines, languishes, and renders that his bane which should be his satisfaction; turns a pleasure into a pain. For nothing is more certain, than that unbounded licentiousness in the conduct of the marriage bed is the ruin of many thousand couples. And let this assertion be remembered by every man, which is recorded by one.

In my opinion copulation is more seasonable in spring and winter; it may be used with moderation in the time of autumn, but in the heats of summer should be carefully avoided, when the ordinary discharges of the body are so great. And as it frequently happens that the ability is very ill proportioned to the inclination, in this case, I would therefore advise all persons of a weak habit, who find themselves powerfully incited to copulation, to forbear phlebotomy, and to live upon the most simple diet, unless they have a mind to engender

to themselves diseases, aches, and other dangerous infirmities, which are, generally speaking, out of the power of medicine to cure. Notwithstanding, let me advise those who have injured their health by the immoderate use of women, to wash their nostrils; their wrists, and the palms of their hands, with the strongest-bodied wine they can get; which, though a simple remedy, may be attended with very salutary effects.

Let me add, before I close this lecture, that as frequent coition is hurtful to many, so commerce with women is necessary towards the health of numbers. It is good for all those who are of a sanguine complexion, and may be profitable to them, in respect to some intervening cause, and the state of their constitutions. For the most part, a moderate use of it is by no means pernicious, but it is not absolutely requisite for youth.

But it is like bathing in cold water, which, if sparingly exercised, recruits the strength; but if too often had recourse to, enervates and destroys it.





CHAPTER VI.

Of the necessary Requisites in a Couple to produce an healthy, and vigorous Offspring.

A MAN cannot pay too much attention to the getting an healthy woman: much depends upon the woman's state of body, as well as mind, in the production of children, and both must act in unison together.

In order that a woman should conceive with child, it is not enough merely to have communication with a man, and receive his seed into her body; the womb or matrix must, over and above all this, be in a proper temper, and situated in its right place; neither should it be choked up with cold or vicious humours.

Let the sperm, both of the man and woman be well digested; but especially the man's, that it may be substantial, entire, and glutinous.

In the act of copulation, let them both let loose at once; let the woman be young, and not defective in her monthly terms.

On the other hand, the members of generation on the man's side, should not be too diminutive;

in such case, neither having proper force to eject the seed, nor capacity to fill the Pudenda in such a manner as it should be.

Let the matrix contain the seed received at least for the space of half a day, and, in my humble opinion, the wife should not, for three days after, admit the embraces of her husband; to the end that no more seed, or not so well digested, may be added to it. Neither let the mouth of the womb be opened; nor should the woman, for some time, feed upon any meats, or roots, that are cold in their operation: let her not by any means breathe a vein or vomit, or take cold: which rules, if she carefully observes, her copulation may be effectual; for one act of copulation may serve to promote conception.

When a woman desires to be with child, she ought to lie warm in bed, well covered, and embrace her husband, come up close to him, that his seed may enter with more force, and be lodged with more security.

Add to this, that, after her husband has withdrawn from her, she ought to turn on that side in which she wishes the gravitation may be made; neither should she stir from that posture (if possible) the remainder of the night.

Concerning the monthly terms of woman, I hold with other philosophers, that during their discharge, carnal copulation is highly improper; for they are of such a pernicious quality, that if a dog should

chance to lick them, he would immediately become delirious and mangy; and if any green plant is sprinkled with them, it will immediately become withered and die.

Those monthly terms or *flowers* (as they are vulgarly called), in women, are no more than the superfluities of their substance, which become a kind of imperfect sperm or seed; but very profitable and necessary in helping conception.

For if there be nothing of these *flowers* in the cell of the womb, the act of copulation, as to conception, is not effectual. As on the other hand, if the womb too much abounds with them, the child, at that time begotten, will be leprous, and of a very weak and sickly habit of body, during its infancy at least, if not for the whole course of life. However, I must observe, that children so conceived, seldom come to maturity; and therefore parents should be very cautious how they offend against the delicacy proper to be observed in this point.

The monthly terms in a woman are regulated by the wax and wane of the moon, and the influence which that planet has upon the sea. According to the exuberance of the seed, the discharge of the *menses* is less or more, yet we must take notice that a woman abounding with a superfluity of terms has but little seed, and therefore is by no means addicted to venereal pleasures.





CHAPTER VII.

The Signs of a Woman who is of a hot Constitution, and naturally prone to the act of copulation.

A WOMAN, hot in constitution, and vehemently desirous of commerce with man, is easily distinguished by those versed in the nature of the sex. However, it may not be amiss to observe, in order to inform the ignorant, that the breasts of such a woman are generally very small, but at the same time conveniently plump and hard: there is a profusion of hair about her privities (which have an high situation near the navel), occasioned by the extraordinary heat in those parts. The hair of the head is short, and inclinable to curl: her voice is shrill and loud; she is bold of speech, proud of heart, cruel to another of her sex, and unsteady in her devotion.

She is very complaisant and obliging in her behaviour towards men, but especially to those of her friends and acquaintance: she is of a florid complexion; upright in the gesture of her body, and more inclined to be lean than fat. She is sometimes given to excess in wine.

We may be sure, a woman answering this description, is extremely lecherous; and one who, in the act of coition, fulfils her desire greatly to the content and pleasure of the man having carnal knowledge of her. She abounds not with monthly terms; nay, sometimes she has not her courses for two or three months together. It is by mere accident that a woman of this complexion gets a great belly. She very rarely conceives; and when she does, has scarcely any milk.

Let me add, that the libidinous woman smells not so rank, when she sweats, as other women do. She has a very sweet breath, moist lips, and is full of mirth and good humour: her eyes sparkle, and she is always very ticklish, particularly about the sole of her feet.





CHAPTER VIII.

**Of the Constitution of Women. Of their Terms, with
miscellaneous Remarks upon such Things as are
analogous to the same subject.**

A WOMAN of a cold constitution is exactly the reverse of her whom I have just now described. She has great and flabby breasts; she is naked, or very thin of hair about the privy parts, which are placed so low, and near the *anus*, that a man always finds a difficulty in entering her body: her hair is lank and long, and being cut off, quickly grows again. She is childish in disposition; timorous in speech; easy of belief, and happy in a gentle temper. She is pious, and pitiful of another's misery.

Take it for granted, that a woman of this condition, is never provoked to copulation by lascivious wishes and desires. She rather suffers the embraces of a man than likes them; and having little enjoyment herself, gives little pleasure to the person lying with her. Her sweat is rank and disagreeable to the smell: the discharge of her *menses* is copious, and she has them constantly every month.

She is more inclined to be fat than lean; is pale, and easy to be impregnant. While she breeds, she is troubled with sickness, and goes very heavy, as the *fætus* increases; and after delivery, she abounds with much milk.

Women are not by nature endued with a competent heat to dry up the gross and peccant humours abounding in their bodies; neither are they able to endure so much labour as men go through, which might serve to cleanse and purge them. The wise Creator, therefore, has given them an evacuation of another kind, to answer all these purposes. Every month, from the fourteenth year of their age, till they grow up to forty, or fifty, they have an issue of bloody matter, which being discharged from the secret parts, preserves the body temperate, wholesome, and pure. These are properly called *menses*, from their coming regularly once a month, which they seldom fail to do, unless women be with child, give suck, or labour under some defect or malady of body or constitution. It is observable, that country women, who work hard, and by consequence sweat a great deal, have very small discharges of this kind. And, while these monthly courses continue, a woman is in a capacity of bearing children; in most cases, an untimely stoppage of them is attended with very bad consequence, and not unfrequently with death: neither is it good when these menstrual evacuations come down suddenly in a flood: they should rather come

by degrees, distilling from the womb by drops, or leisurely, without interruption.

It is extremely fatal, when the courses come upon a woman while she is with child; for being highly unnatural, it always proceeds from some very violent disorder: it is always a sign also, that the child with which she goes, is very feeble, and in great danger, being unable to receive its accustomed nourishment, although the humours are multiplied in the womb of the mother for that purpose.

However, when this accident happens, which is not very frequent, I would not advise the women by any means to have recourse to physic, but only to eat meats hot and dry, or meats hot and moist by nature, such as ginger, cummin, and new-laid eggs; the fume of musk and frankincense, taken down the throat, or up the body, is very serviceable upon this occasion.

That a man ought to have his seed ready, and prepared for it; and the woman that desires to be with child, ought to forbear the company of her husband for some days after she thinks she has conceived; which she may in some sort be a judge of, as soon as the man ejects his seed, from the extraordinary pleasure she receives during the action, The more the seed is preserved, it is the more vigorous; and if it be derived from generous meats, it is more digested, unctious, and full of virtue.

A woman prepared for conception, ought not,

as I said before, to be full of her monthly courses; neither ought she to be too much emptied of them, but so that the womb may be a little clear and mundified. And because that, in the act of generation, the man diffuses his seed, and woman hers, they should do it both at the same instant; and the woman should apply herself close to her husband, and lie most on that side on which she desires the conception should be.

Let me add, that when the man finds his seed coming, he should press very vigorously; neither ought he, after having discharged it, to withdraw his yard immediately from the womb; but let it lie till it entirely looses its erection.

After the act of copulation the woman should take rest: and if it be possible, not make water for some hours. When she rises from bed, let her not do any thing to disquiet herself, but walk gently up and down; neither ought she to eat or drink too much: meat should be the most nourishing, well boiled, or well roasted. After she has eaten, she should sleep a little, and take great care to keep herself warm.

But now to explain these matters, which, perhaps, may seem dark and necessary to many. The male child, as I have already mentioned, according to the opinion of many learned men, is conceived on the right side of the womb, and the female on the left: but though it is quite proper that a woman should pay some regard to this doctrine, yet, let

me say, that the conception of a male, or female child, does not so much depend on the side of the womb on which it is engendered, as from the testicle that sendeth forth the seed; from the right testicle cometh the male, and from the left the female: besides, the seed coming from the right testicle, is more conducive to generation, and diffuses a greater delight all over the body.

I knew a soldier, who, having lost his left testicle in an hospital at Antwerp, had afterwards six-and-twenty children, all boys; and, being willing to make an experiment of the contrary kind, I cut the right testicle from a dog, and making him often lie bitches, I do aver, that the puppies were all of the feminine gender.





CHAPTER IX.

Of the Proportion of Parts, according to the Laws of Nature, and their Defects.

ALTHOUGH we are loth to expose the mysteries of love to the eyes of the world, yet 'tis commonly known what passes in wedlock; and people would still be better satisfied to have a more perfect knowledge thereof. If on one hand Sin has tacked shame to this knowledge; on the other, Nature hath placed nothing there but what is delightful and pretty,

Nature never made any thing undesignedly, it having established laws for all the parts we are composed of. Those called the *amorous parts*, have commonly their dimension both in men and women. The man's member, according to the same laws, ought not, generally speaking, to be above six or seven inches in length, and three or four in circumference, which is the just measure nature has kept in forming that part in most men. If the verge is longer and bigger, 'tis unwieldy, for which reason the inhabitants of the Southern countries are not so proper for generation as we.

The passage of a woman is commonly six or seven inches deep; the interior circumference has no determined measure; for by an admirable structure, this part proportions so well with a man's verge, that it becomes wider and straiter, according to the instruments that touch it.

Casuists and lawyers treat of this sort of business as well as physicians, but after a different manner. The first think themselves obliged to take notice of these things for the good of people's souls, by refusing marriage to such as they judge incapable, and separating for some time husband and wife, that may be indisposed for matrimony, through some infirmities of the genitals.

Lawyers find themselves induced to ventilate these questions for the interest of justice, and the good of the public, that they may know the reason of the dissolution of marriages, the better to rectify this abuse. But because this subject is but indifferently handled by the one and the other, I'll endeavour to give some light into the difficulties that depend thereon, that they may for the future judge more exactly of such differences, as shall fall under their hands, either as judges or arbitrators.

When the man's genitals cannot unite with the woman's, people commonly accuse the infirmities of one, or the other sex. But for the better comprehending how those infirmities happen, we must imagine, that the *intelligence* which is ordered to form the body of a boy in the mother's womb, not

finding always matter enough to frame the genitals, is obliged to render the same parts defective; and because the vital parts are more necessary than those which contribute towards the propagation of the *species*, the *intelligence* sometimes employs all the matter destined to form the privy parts of the more necessary one; and for this reason, the privy parts happen to be very small in time, the matter being managed for other purposes. This gave occasion to an observation of Platerus, who remarks, that a certain man had only a *glans* covered with a *prepuce*, instead of the whole member. The defects of the privy parts, as well as others, are not always natural; and the gentleman mentioned by Paulus Zachias would never have got children, if he had wanted half his yard from the time of his birth.

Mortification of the flesh and chastity are powerful causes of the diminution of these parts. In some ascetics, after their deaths, the parts have been discovered with difficulty, and would have escaped observation had not their situation been known. Grief, some diseases, and particularly stinted and indifferent food, are efficiently productive of the lessening of the nobler parts of man.

Too long or too big members are neither proper for copulation, nor generation; so that for convenience a man's part ought to be middle-sized, and the woman's proportionable, in order for a stricter union, and to receive more agreeable touches in

all its enjoyments. Admitting it true what Physiognomists say, viz., that men with big noses have also stout members; as also, that they are more robust and courageous than others, we have no reason to wonder at Heliogabalus's making choice of all whom nature had favoured with swinging parts, as Lampridius reports, and particularly of big-nosed soldiers, that he might be able to undertake great expeditions with small numbers, and oppose his enemy with great vigour; but at the same time he did not take notice, that well-hung men are the greatest blockheads, and the most stupid of mankind.

Little men have commonly a bigger member than others; nay, some men formerly had verges of a foot long, if we may credit Martial. I cannot tell but this poet may intimate Clodius, who debauched Pompeia, Cæsar's wife, in the temple of the Bona Dea; for he, according to history, had one as long as two of the longest put together.

Bigness and smallness are not the only faults; the yard is also defective when of a little figure, or when all the little parts it is composed of are not in their right places; for marriage being instituted among Christians, in order to have children, there is no doubt if the man's genitals be so ill figured as not to be able to consummate the marriage; and withal, if this infirmity be incurable, such a marriage ought to be declared invalid. In fine, there are so many other infirmities that deprive the

man's member of its ordinary function, that it would require a particular discourse to describe them all. To be brief, one cannot agreeably enjoy a woman, if one hath been roughly handled by a violent *gonorrhœa*, or a *nodus virulentus*: if the privy parts are excessive big: if the yard be bridled by the filement of the *glans*; or lastly, if we are afflicted with any distempers that hinder caressing; all which have often caused dissolution of marriages.

As for the women, they are not altogether so hot as men: they are subject to more infirmities. Barrenness, which is the most considerable, proceeds sooner from the wife than the husband; for if the least part should be wanting of that infinite number that is constitutive of the genitals, generation cannot be accomplished; and a woman that has such an imperfection, can never hope to obtain the glorious and sweet title of mother.

I have no thoughts to speak of all the parts that concur within the formation of children, on the woman's side. I have said enough in the preceding chapter: my design at present, is only to discover such infirmities of the privy parts as may hinder copulation, and that may be cured.

I do not at all wonder, that the Phenicians, as St. Athanasius reports, obliged their daughters, by severe laws, to undergo defloration by their slaves, before they were married; nor that the Armenians, according to Strabo, sacrificed their daughters in the temple of the goddess Anaitis, to be deflowered

in order to find more advantageous matches suitable to their rank and condition; for 'tis not to be expressed what pain and faintness a man suffers in the first adventure, at least if the maid be strait. 'Tis by far more agreeable to kiss a woman that is accustomed to the pleasures of love, than to caress one that never knew a man before. For as a *locksmith*, when he first brings a new lock to us, is desired to move the springs, that we may avoid the trouble we should meet with in the first turnings of it; so likewise the people mentioned but now, were in the right to enact such laws.

Jeanne d'Arc, commonly called *la Pucelle d'Orléans*, was one of these strait maids; had she prostituted her honour, as the enemies of her virtue and bravery publish to this very day, William de Cruda and William de Judiris, doctors of physic, who visited her in the prison of Rouen, by order of the English Cardinal, and the Earl of Warwick, would never have declared her to be so strait, as to be hardly able to admit of a man's company.*—It is no great fault in a young woman to have a strait *vagina* or inlet, unless it be so as to hinder generation; the small ones are more universal, but the wide ones ought not always to bear the blame; for in some it may be naturally as wide, as in those that have had children. Though this last faultiness does not hinder copulation, yet few wide women conceive,

* Burnt by the bigotry of the times in 1431. Her accusation was for witchcraft.

because they cannot keep the liquor long enough, which the man with pleasure communicates to them.

The passage is naturally a little winding, and doth not redress itself till it comes to the point of an amorous conjunction: 'tis but justice that nature should stiffen it, seeing it stiffens the genitals of man, to favour the pleasing of one another, and facilitating generation. When this passage is dried and hardened, it is not in love's power to mend it, and the spirits grow blunt, and lose their vigour, when working upon hardness; so that nothing but those sweet and benign humours that nature sends monthly to this place, can soften and redress those hardened parts.

We should not meet with so many disorders as are observable among married people, if Plato's rules for a well-ordered republic were followed; they marry blindfold, without considering beforehand if they are capable of generation. Did they examine one another stark-naked before they are married, according to the laws of this philosopher, or else appoint persons for that purpose, I am sure a great many people would be easier than they are, and Hammeberge would never have been divorced from Theodoric, had these laws been in force.

No body can guess by viewing the outside of a pretty and well-shaped woman, whether she has any infirmities that may hinder copulation. But when the husband goes about to execute the orders he received in being married, he meets with obstacles;

the *hymen* or *caruncles*, joining closely together, and filling up the middle space of the woman's privy parts, frustrate his efforts; let him push till he is all in a flame, those obstacles will not give way to force, even if he were as vigorous as all the scholars of the physician Aquapendente. Women that are closed up and live after fifteen or eighteen years, are not all entirely so: they have a little hole, or several together, for the paffage of the terms, and sometimes to give an entrance to a man's feed. Although such women are not fit for copulation, yet they may sometimes conceive; and after this manner engendered Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, who was obliged to undergo incision before she could be brought to bed.

There are so many infirmities incident to a woman's privy parts, that hinder the consummation of marriage, and consequently generation, that it would require a book on purpose to speak of them favorably. It shall suffice here to add, to what I have said before, that sometimes there are excrescences of flesh in the lower parts of the womb, by which copulation is frustrated; also that the *clitoris* in some, swells to such a bigness, as to prevent the entrance of the yard; and lastly, that the *labia* are sometimes so long and flouting, that there is a necessity of cutting them in maids before they marry.





CHAPTER X.

At what Age a Young Man and a Young Woman ought to marry.

WE have no reason to wonder at our mortality, seeing we are composed of so many different particles, opposite to one another. The elements always jarring in our bodies, without our being sensible of it, and the natural heat dissipating the radical moisture that sustains us, are the two causes of our end, to which we hasten with so much precipitation. Our heat acting always on our moisture, consumes and destroys it by degrees; for as the flame of a lamp decays by the dissipation of the oil that feeds it, so our heat is extinguished for want of moisture to keep it up. Air, food, and drink, are not capable to repair it for ever, but only for a time; and the parts that maintain our fire becoming old, grow weary of acting always after the same manner, and to receive at the same time, what makes them subsist and perish.

Nature foreseeing the world would be at an end, took care to provide against it, and has given to

both sexes from the beginning of ages an admirable structure of parts to propagate mankind, and implanted secret fires for the perpetuation thereof; the sweet society of life was instituted in the infancy of the world, not only by a conjunction of bodies, but an agreeable mixture of souls. Matrimony, that is almost as old as the world itself, is that source of mortality, and the most important condition of a man's life, because cities and republics would run to ruin, and be entirely forsaken without it.

Every age is not capable of tasting the sweets of matrimony: the first and last years have their obstacles, children being too feeble, and old men too languishing. The middle part of our life is the most proper age for Venus, who, like Mars, requires only young people full of fire, healthy and vigorous.

Physicians are of different opinions about the divisions of our life: some divide it into four ages, others five, and others into a great many more. But to consider the matter strictly, years do not make up the ages; 'tis the vigour and temper that distinguish them: a girl of twelve or fourteen may have a child, being robust and vigorous; whereas another cannot bring one forth at eighteen or twenty, because of the weakness of her parts, and dryness of her temperament. Nevertheless, the opinion most followed is that which divides our life into five periods; the first is Adolescency, which lasts from our birth to the age of fifteen, after which we grow no more; from twenty-five to thirty-five or forty, is

the flower of a man's age, and that is what we call youth; age of *consistency* follows upon youth, and lasts to forty-five or fifty; in which time people find themselves of the same strength and temperaments; the fourth age is the first old age, which lasts to sixty, and at last the decrepit age accompanies men to the grave.

Infancy and puerility are ignorant as to the production of men; and though some historians may render this assertion doubtful, by a story they make of a child of seven years old that got a woman with child; yet because there is no example in antiquity; and besides that generation is altogether incompatible with the weakness of his age, one must allow me to stick to my opinion, and to exclude children from the number of those that are capable to engender.

I will not say so much of those that have attained to years of discretion; for when the voice changes, and grows bigger and harsher, by the increase of the natural heat in the thorax; when they begin to smell rank, by reason of disagreeable vapours that rise from the seed; when hair grows on the privy parts, and frequent titillations are felt: then, I say, a man may be fired with the heat of love, and his privy parts dispose themselves for the caresses of women.

Physicians, who narrowly watch nature, cannot determine exactly the age men ought to be of, to copulate and engender, there being so much variety

in the constitution and vigour of men, and the parts that serve for generation, that 'tis impossible to decide justly concerning that affair. One may say in general, that we begin to engender at twelve or fourteen, but we cannot exactly mark out the year in particular persons.

We read in our medical observations, that some sparks have been fathers of children at ten years of age, and some deserve the name of mothers at nine. Soubert, physician at Montpelier, the most learned of his time, saw Jeanne de Peirte in Gascony, who had a child at the latter end of her ninth year. This is not the only history I could relate, several of the like nature happening in France and hot climates, if that which is left us in writing by St. Jerome did not suffice to confirm what I have said: for he assures us, that a child of ten years old got a nurse with child, with whom he was used to lie for some time.

Yet I own these sort of prodigies are very scarce in the world, and that several ages may not parallel such a passage. But the most assured sign of being in a condition of engendering is, according to the sentiments of physicians, when a boy can evacuate seed, and the terms appear in a girl; then 'tis evident that nature has furnished one and the other sex wherewithal to perpetuate themselves. Those flowings of humours appear very seldom at nine or ten years; nay, one shall hardly see girls of twelve, and boys of fourteen, capable of obeying

love, and produce such matter as forms men. A woman would be very slow, if she was not capable of perpetuating herself, by the production of a child at the age of sixteen; and a young man of eighteen would be esteemed very cold, if lying with such a woman, he should find it impossible to partake of the pleasures of love. In fine, one may conclude, from what I have said, that the most forward age to get children, is that of sixteen or eighteen. Some physicians have maintained, that women were hotter than men, because they are sooner ripe for business. For if, generally speaking, say they, they have more blood, they have also more heat, because the natural heat resides after a more eminent manner, where there is most of that humour.

They add, that we observe women to be more ingenious and active than men, because having more blood, they have also more spirits, which are the cause of their activity: they have also hair sooner on their privities; and some have been seen to have had their privities veiled before they have entered the age of discretion.

Thus women grow up, and are sooner old, because the heat acting upon their bodies with more strength than is fitted for action, they dissipate soon their moistness.

Besides, they are much more amorous than men, and, as sparrows, do not live long, because they are too hot, and too susceptible of love; so women

last less time, because they have a devouring heat that consumes them by degrees.

There are Messalinas found to this very day, who, by reason of their excessive heat, would be in a condition to dispute with several of the most vigorous men. In effect, they suffer cold with more constancy; and if their natural heat, of which they have a large share, did not resist the coldness of the winter, we should hear more women than men complain of the rigour of the season.

If I might be allowed some digression from the subject I treat of, I think I might without any manner of difficulty, prove the contrary of what is said of the constitutions of women. I could shew, that the great quantity of blood proceeds rather from the mediocrity than any excess of heat: that women are rather fickle and light than ingenious; that if they engender and grow old sooner, it shews the weakness of that heat: that excess of love cannot be particularly ascribed to the force of this same heat, but to the inconstancy of their imagination, or rather to the providence of nature, that has made them to serve us for play-toys after our more serious occupations. After all, if they are not susceptible of cold, we must not look for the cause thereof but in the ordinary plight of body, which is always opposite to the generation of the most active qualities.

Man, on the contrary, acts with more firmness, feeds more heartily, defends himself with more

courage, and presence of mind, reasons with more strength, and contributes towards the getting of children with more alacrity. He acts particularly in generation, where he communicates himself, and by other actions of body and mind, gives proofs of his strength and heat; whereas the woman only suffers the impressions a man makes upon her, and often is not ready so soon as he to furnish withal to form a man. In short, she is only to conceive, to give suck, and to breed up children.

Moreover, a male is sooner accomplished in his mother's womb than a female, stirs with more strength, and comes into the world somewhat sooner; which ought to be ascribed to the force of his heat and temperament; for wherever heat is abounding, it perfects and forwards every thing with greater speed; and for this very reason, we seldom or never see twins of different sexes, there being too much inequality of heat and temperament, when they are embarrassed in the same strings.

Lawyers, who for the most part follow the opinions of physicians in those matters, have fixed a time for matrimony in the middle part of the age of *discretion*. And because those are extremely scarce that begin to engender at nine or ten years, as well as those that cannot engender at sixteen or eighteen, they have determined the age of sixteen for men, and that of fourteen for women. These years centring in the middle part of the *pubertas*,

so that those that are under the years before-mentioned are counted pupils, and the law allows them not to be accused of adultery, or to marry. If one breaks that law by a premature wedding, the judges declare such a marriage null and invalid, and puts those that had contracted it in *statu quo ante*; because, say they, 'tis an essential requisite to matrimony, to be in a condition to get children; and that those that are under those ages, are not presumed to be capable thereof.

Politicians, who only consider the duration of a flourishing state, are not of the same opinion as lawyers in relation to the time that young people ought to marry. They know that 'tis not only the goodness of the climate, fruitfulness of the ground, nor riches of the inhabitants, that render a monarch formidable, but the health and vigour of the people that appertain unto him. The age of fourteen or sixteen is too feeble to make a present to the State of any witty or robust men. And these politicians teach physicians, that there is a more advanced age required for the generation of men that must be capable to govern a kingdom, or to manage a republic.

In fact, a woman is too delicate at that age to engender well-made children, her internal parts not being large enough to go her time out; and a woman so young cannot suffice for her own growth, and the nourishment of the child. Child-bearings are often dangerous, and she may apprehend the

loss of her life in giving it to another. On the other hand, a young man is too feeble both in body and mind at sixteen. The seed is not, connected and digested enough for the production of a strong child; and granting he is able to engender at such an age, the children will prove very small and tender.

Plato and Aristotle, those two great geniuses among the ancients, did not allow to marry before thirty; and at present, a person ought not to marry before twenty-four, without the consent of a father or mother, which obliged Gratianus to make a law, and to limit the perfections of a man to that age. For when growing is over, and the natural heat is busying itself no farther to dilate the parts of a man's body, it is only employed in its preservation, and fomenting the amorous parts, for the more effectual production of matter fit for the perpetuation of that species.

The best way is to follow the common opinion, viz., to count a man perfect at twenty-five, and a woman at twenty, they being then both better qualified to marry than in a more advanced age; for such a man wants nothing at that age to content a woman. His privities have the dimensions that are requisite for the well-performing amorous embraces; his seed is fertile; the spirits that ought to serve for generation, are generated in greater plenty, and his verge is always ready to furnish wherewithal to get a child, even against the will of the owner.

Many young men, who are allowed much liberty, injure themselves greatly by premature connections with the sex; and some of the fair are as much to blame for other practices, which may be easily guessed; but I shall avoid to name, not wishing to instruct those who are yet ignorant and innocent of the *mysteries of iniquity*. Weaknesses in their limbs and eyes are not the only consequences of such vile embraces, but the parties seldom arrive at the full stature of the kind: they shorten their days, and often deprive themselves of the possibility of ever producing any offspring. It is to my own sex I address myself. Forbear the mercenary harlot, and think of the joys which await you in the arms of a mistress or a wife.





CHAPTER XI.

What Time of the Day or Night one ought to Kiss one's Wife.

A GOOD digestion of the stomach does not a little contribute to our health when well performed. Our chyle is good, our blood pure, our spirits moving and penetrating, our seed thick and fertile, and our solid parts robust. In one word, we enjoy perfect health. But if any thing hinders the action of our stomach, we are full of crudities, our blood is nothing but phlegm, our parts dead water, and our seed no more than snivel. We feel nothing but indigestions, infirmities, and weakness, which hinders us from prosecuting any action with vigour.

There is nothing that ruins our stomach and weakens digestion more than love: it exhausting us to that degree, by dissipating our natural heat, and wasting our spirits, that we feel great inconveniences in the principal parts.

The stomach, therefore, being the part that contributes most to our health, when it performs its function rightly, is first attacked in the excess of

love; but the brain and nerves are not the least sharers in the consequences; their sufferings have sometimes arrived to that point in some persons, that they have lost their senses.

All the spermatic parts being naturally cold, are weakened by the excess of love. The stomach, which is one of the most considerable, is one of the first that feels it: and one may say, that it is the source of all the inconveniences that ensue upon the abuse of pleasures. Allowing, therefore, Venus to be one of the foreign causes, most contrary to our health, when we give ourselves up to it, with excess, or out of season; and on the other hand, as experience testifies, to keep us in health, when we use it discreetly, let us examine what hour of the day is most proper to avoid all its inconveniences.

It is neither the diversions of the day or night, nor the pleasure of the morning or evening that discompose us: whether it is before or after sleep, we fling ourselves into the arms of a woman, that destroys our health, or causes any weakness in the stomach and nerves, or heaviness in the head. All disorders that arise from embracing of a woman, spring chiefly from the excess of our passion, and the ill husbanding of an opportunity when we are desirous of caressing. Were our passion moderate, our amorous transports better spared; and if with that we kissed, when neither too full nor too empty, I am sure that Venus, far from doing any hurt, would keep a young man in health; for that

which is according to the laws of nature, cannot be the cause of any evil, except abuses happen.

Some physicians are of opinion, that the amorous pleasures we take in the day time, are more destructive than those enjoyed in the night; and the caresses of a woman wasting us excessively, we ought to repose, and by sleep and tranquillity, repair the lost spirits; whereas, after our ordinary occupations of the day, we undergo a greater fatigue with women, and tire ourselves more by entering upon any wearisome business.

Others explain themselves better on this subject, and believe that break of day is the most proper season for caressing. They say we are then upon more equal terms, our strength not being dissipated by the actions of the day, our soul not being burthened with aliments; and besides, our spirits are multiplied, and our natural heat fortified by sleep. No troublesome crudities are felt, concotion is perfected, and the nerves being full of spirits, are not so soon relaxed. It is what Hippocrates intends in his rules for preserving health, when he advises us to work before we eat and drink, and to sleep before we kiss.

Indeed Aurora, or the morning, which answers the spring season, appears to be more proper for generation: for after a man has agreeably diverted himself with his wife, and taken a little nap after his lawful pleasures, he soon repairs what losses he has had, and quickly cures the weariness he has

brought upon himself in love: then he rises and goeth about his ordinary concerns, his wife continuing some while a-bed, to preserve the precious charge he hath intrusted her withal. It is the common practice of tradesmen that are in health, who for the most part have well shaped and robust children. For being tired with the fatigue of the preceding day, they wait for the morning to embrace their wives, and avoid, without doubt, in so doing, the inconvenience other men are subject to, who running headlong without any manner of restriction, abandon themselves to the violence of their passions.

All physicians agree, that one ought not to kiss fasting, because one ought not to work when hungry. Work wastes and dries our spirits, and the work of love enervates entirely. On the contrary, we ought to embrace (as some will have it) when our belly is moderately filled; for at such a juncture we feel a strange desire to be meddling, by the heat and spirits that the aliments communicate unto us; after which, we may recruit our forces by sleep, repose being the only remedy for that kind of weariness.

But to speak freely, all these opinions are liable to objections. The day has nothing that is hurtful, and the night nothing that is favourable to love. On the contrary, one may say, that the evening hath some attractives which the night has not. Our passion awakes, and is roused afresh at the

sight of a pretty person; and the light of a taper does not set off beauty to so much advantage as that of the sun.

Otherwise, if we had any thing good in the stomach, and all concoctions were not accomplished, the morning would be the fittest time for embracing. But there being nothing but phlegm and crudities in our stomach at that time, the remains of our last meal cannot be stirred by the feast of love but to our disadvantage. By reason of these crudities, physicians advise to eat a little in the morning in order to preserve health, by reason what we have taken being digested, the stomach will be discharged of the ordure that are gathered in it during sleep, and rendered more fit for the reception of what we shall eat at dinner.

Wherefore, if we kiss upon an empty stomach, we languish immediately, and are very sensible of the pains and weakness that such an evacuation causes. We lose heat and spirit by such caresses, and have no store within for any speedy recruits. Nay, far from recruiting, we increase our losses by the crudities we have, and constrain them by our passionate movements to mix with our blood, and corrupt the whole mass.

To resolve the question therefore, after having proposed what can be said to this matter, I must be allowed to observe neither day nor night, hours nor moments, but only the disposition we are in, when egged on by Venus. When perchance we

are dull and drowsy, by an obscure pain in the head, heavy about the loins, pensive and melancholy without a cause, and withal not having, contrary to our custom, caressed a long while, we ought neither to observe time nor measures. It signifies nothing to embrace a woman, fasting or full, morning or evening. All hours are proper, when the business is to ease ourselves of something that is troublesome. There is a refreshment in change of business, and the work of love is sweeter after our ordinary occupations of the day: we find ourselves more light and more gay; digestion is better performed, our blood circulates more freely; in one word, our body is not so cumbersome as before.

But we must not deceive ourselves on these occasions, which happen more rarely than we are aware of, because nature doth often ease us of these superfluous humours during our sleep, after which there is nothing left to trouble us the next morning. If we erroneously fancy to be discomposed by too much seed, when we are out of order upon some other account, we shall find the unhappy effects of it, and scarce be able to atone for the fault committed.

It is better to stay till the first digestion is over, and the second also accomplished, till the stomach hath discharged what it has digested, and the heart, liver, and other sanguine bowels have changed the chyle they have lately received into blood. Then our body is full of heat and spirits; our stomach

has been but now satisfied; our brains and nerves are quickened by new spirits, of which they send a sufficient share to our privy parts; insomuch, that whatsoever efforts we make to exhaust ourselves, we are supplied from within with wherewithal to repair our losses.

After these great maxims, grounded on experience, I dare say that in twenty-four hours, there are two considerable periods for amorous sports. One is four or five hours after supper. Our body is then neither too full nor too empty, the concoction of the stomach being in some measure accomplished, and the entrails comforted by the arrival of new humours, the heat is recruited, the spirits multiplied; and though we should dissipate at that time a great many of them, we may have enough left to secure us from many inconveniences by the loss. Our embraces are effectual, and far from feeling pain and *vertigos* thereby, we are exhilarated and comforted: insomuch, that I may be permitted to say with Hermogenes, that the pleasures of love are sweet at nights, and wholesome at days.

What I find most advantageous in one of these two opportunities, is, that we fortify ourselves two several ways. When we caress a woman after dinner, we recruit in some measure our forces at supper, and increase them with sleep the ensuing night: whereas, if we kiss after supper, we have nothing but the night's rest to reimburse us of what we are out of pocket.

Birds that follow the motions of nature, not to speak here of other creatures, copulate most commonly in the evening. We may hear on all sides the male call its female in the month of May, and the female answer the male: the heat of the day having disposed them to caresses, and the food they have taken in the day-time heated their blood, so that the humour which is generated in their secret parts the night before, excites them to discharge it,

The greater the pleasures are, the more pain they cause, if we do not take necessary precautions to secure ourselves from their allurements.

Under this appearance and shew of voluptuousness lurk frequently causes of sorrow and grief, and we swallow the poison willingly, without being sensible of what we are about.

When we feel the darts of love, and our heart heated after a debauch, as most commonly happens to those that are very lascivious, we ought at such time to bend all our endeavours to shun its incitements, if we are in a condition to know them. We know that wine renders us stout and loving, but it stifles all our natural heat by degrees, when taken to excess. Indeed we appear more brisk and gay after taking a glass, and are fit to undertake more than at another time. A tree, whereof the root is heated by lime, bears fruit sooner and of a better colour than another, but lives not very long. So love and wine acting equal on the parts, no doubt weaken us in a double capacity.

We ought to shun all opportunities that may incite to love after a debauch, if we will avoid the evil consequences, whereof we are for the most part ignorant.

What wastings we otherwise undergo, joined to the pleasures taken with a woman, can but discompose us in a great measure; and I would never advise a man to embrace his wife after bleeding, a looseness, or some other considerable distemper, unless he has a mind to abridge his days: for Venus cannot be agreeable after other evacuations; let a man be never so robust, he cannot avoid those grievous accidents that are procured by irregular pleasures.

I have known men, who not being entirely recovered from some acute distemper, have died presently after caressing their wives, notwithstanding there were no symptoms that might indicate their death; and at this very time, I know some others that will hardly escape.

However, if we must commit an error, it is better to do it upon a full than empty stomach. The accidents that ensue thereupon are not so dismal, and we have more remedies for the succour of plenitude than for that of evacuations.

Experience has not yet taught us, whether women ought to observe times in being caressed. The humours they void when embraced are not so sprituous as ours, and their weakness proceeds not so much from the loss of matter, as from the excessive tickling, and the tiresome motions of love.

But ours are caused by dissipation of spirits, and natural heat; insomuch, that we may say, that women are in a capacity to do the trick at all times, but men ought to take precautions as experience convinces.





CHAPTER XII.

How many Times one may amorously caress one's Wife in a Night.

VANITY is a passion natural to man; he is drawn in when he has the least thoughts of it; and we may say, without enlarging upon the matter, that it is one of the greatest evils mortals are subject unto. Really, man is but the dream of a shadow, according to a Greek poet; to consider him nearly, he is nothing but weakness and misery, and shews himself most ridiculous and feeble by his vanity, and that without doubt made Democritus mock mankind. But vanity is more particularly exerted in the matters of love; to make ourselves admired, we boast of exploits we never achieved. The Emperor Proculus imposes finely upon the world, in a letter to his friend Metianus, endeavouring to persuade us, that he kissed a hundred virgins made prisoners of war, in less than a fortnight. And the poet, who is the subject of gallant conversation, brags of having performed nine times in a night.

I own we are valiant when we speak of the feats of love, but are for the most part arrant cowards,

when we should execute its orders. It is not enough to be wanton with a woman, there must be something real to show one's manhood, and be able to produce one of our species.

I know, some are of so lascivious a constitution, as to be in a capacity to kiss several women for a great many nights successively, and even be in a condition to satisfy them; but at long run, they weaken and enervate themselves to that degree, their seed becomes barren, and their privy parts refuse to obey them. Nero was not the only man that wanted strength and courage in the arms of the handsome Poppaea, according to Petronius. We have a number of other examples; and if it be allowable to name persons that have been exhausted and disabled in the arms of those they have loved, I could fill more than one page of this book.

We ought to look upon as fabulous what Crucis reports of a servant, that got ten servant maids with child in one night; as also, what Clemens Alexandrinus tells us of Hercules; who having for the space of twelve or fourteen hours lain with fifty Athenian virgins, got the same number of boys upon their bodies, afterwards called Thespiades.

We know, as we have observed somewhere else, that the seed of man is kept in cellules, and little store-houses, at the root of the yard; and that those magazines resembling small bladders, that communicate the matter, are ranked as the little spaces

in a pomegranate when the seeds are taken out. There are about three or four on each side; or rather, one only that has several small cavities. These bladders, as well as the glandules, are full of seed in a healthy young man of a loving temper, and all may contain so much seed as is required for three or four evacuations; yet still some remain in the vessels that come from the testicles for one more. I am not so exact as those who say, that there are three sorts of seed which have each their particular virtue. Experience has convinced me, that there is but one sort, which we see sally out from the *virge*; and though it is found more liquid and thicker in sundry places, yet mixing when sallying out, they appear but one matter, and of the same consistency.

As soon as the fancy is touched, and the small fibres of the brain shaken by the thoughts of love, there is an internal sweat in our privy parts; and the spirits which rush thither with precipitation, force out a limpid liquor from the *prostrate glands*, which prepares the conduit for the passage of the seed. But when one is joined amorously to a woman, then the three small bladders, most ready for evacuation, empty in an instant, and by so doing, give proof of perfect manhood.

Meanwhile, nature endeavours to repair the loss in a moment, capacitating the party in a little while to reap fresh pleasures, and to evacuate a second time such humours as are most disposed to come

forth. Nature having no other aim than generation in this action, gathers speedily such matter as it stands in need of, disposing the matter to be voided at pleasure; and the fancy being perpetually moved by the beauty and charms of the person encompassed within one's arms, our passion wakes, and the privy parts are still in a condition to obey. Thus happens a third encounter with the woman, and what is most pure and precious he has shared with her.

If we design to go farther, when the heart is inflamed, though the privy parts begin to lose their strength by the dissipation of the natural heat and spirits, nature makes another effort to muster up what matter is remaining in the *vesiculae seminales*, or seminal bladders, and neighbouring parts, squeezing them on all sides, and preparing the humour gathered with so much speed for a nimble evacuation. Then there is a new concourse of spirits, and the fire which seemed before extinguished, kindles afresh, and is felt in the privy parts: whereupon another evacuation ensues, and the woman is so closely pressed, as to be impregnated by these reiterated evacuations.

At last, after having reposed some time, and by sleep recruited the dissipated spirits, we continue still near the beloved person, and caresses are reciprocal, though they seem to be somewhat more pressing on the woman's side, she beginning to be inflamed when the man is wasted; whereas the man invited her at first.

After all, there is still some motion felt, and the secret parts, though flabby just now, begin to stiffen again; nature gathering what seed it possibly can from the neighbouring parts, drawing it even from the testicles to dispose the party to a fourth adventure.

I own it is not done in a trice, some time being required for recruiting such matter as was but now evacuated; yet of all the actions in nature, none is dispatched with greater celerity and briskness than that of generation.

Wherefore the fancy is once more heated, and neither courage nor matter wanting to make a new sacrifice unto love. The secret parts have spirits enough to go through stitch, and at the least cares-ses of a woman we perform still, and make her partake of that humour which she so passionately desires.

But if there must be a sixth attempt, our parts are cold and languid, and the humour that comes forth after five several repetitions, is crude and un-concocted, or else a vermillion of blood, as that of a pullet newly killed, flowing sometimes in such plenty, by reason of the feebleness of the parts, it is difficult to recover it; instance, a gallant spark of my acquaintance, that lives still but miserably, who having kissed his courtezan five times in an afternoon, voided more than two ounces of blood, the sixth time, through the *yard*.

Whence I am apt to believe, and that with some-

justice, that all the efforts we are able to make near a woman in one night, cannot amount to above four or five times; these great extravagances in love, we are told on, being so many fables put on us, that if we did give credit to people concerning this matter, without consulting reason and experience, we should be the same bubbles and fools they are.

A king of Arragon pronounced formerly a true sentence on the point in hand. A certain woman, married to a Catalonian, was obliged to throw herself at the king's feet, to implore his succours against the frequent caresses of her husband; who, according to her report, would soon kill her if the business was not otherwise ordered. The king commanded the husband to appear, to know the truth of it. The Catalonian owned sincerely that he performed ten times every night. Upon which, the king forbid him, upon pain of death, to kiss her above six times, for fear of injuring the woman's health by his extravagant lust and passion.

I know the Spaniards, that live in a hot country, are abundantly more lecherous than we are in France, the excessive heat of that climate, juicy food, women close kept and veiled, and the bilious and melancholy constitution of men naturally loving idleness, are good reasons for their usual lust and lechery. Whereas in France the heat is moderate, the aliments less nourishing, women are free, and converse with us as the men, are less bilious and

melancholy. In fine, we apply ourselves to several things, and idleness is an odious thing amongst us; so that, generally speaking, if a Spaniard is able to do the trick six times a night, a Frenchman can do it but five.

The Rabbins, aiming only at the preservation of their nation, taxed a husband's benevolence to his wife at the following rate: a countryman or husbandman one night in a week; a tradesman or carrier one night in a month; a seafaring man two nights in the year, and a student but one night in two years. I am sure, that if women had had a hand in those laws, they would not have gone on after that rate. Witness a councillor's wife, who told me very ingenuously the other day, that she would rather be the countryman's wife, than be married to all the rest together.

The ancients used to put Mercury with Venus, in the portrait of that goddess, to teach us that reason, whereof they thought Mercury the god, ought to manage our sensualities. Truly, we relish them with greater satisfaction, when the use is not so frequent; for we are for the most part disgusted at too great a plenty of meat to such a point as to be willing to exchange a great man's table for that of a lower sort.

If moderation is commendable in any thing, it is without doubt in love. Solon, by the oracle esteemed one of the wisest, foresaw very well what misfortunes would happen to men by the indiscreet use

of Venus, when ordering his citizens not to kiss a woman above three times a month.

The frequent caresses of women exhaust our strength and forces entirely; whereas moderately used, they preserve our health, and render our body more free and active than before; I should therefore advise neither to loath Venus with terror, nor to yield to her charms too slavishly and effeminately, and with what formerly Euripides did in speaking of Venus.

I cannot commend the philosopher Æas, who only kissed his wife three times all the time he was married, although she brought him a son at every time. As for Xenocrates, who appeared rather a stone than a man, when lying with the courtezan Phryné, we ought to believe it was the effect of that continence which was owing to the study of philosophy, and not any faultiness in the motion of his secret parts.

Constitution, age, climate, season, and our way of living, influence all our caresses. A man at twenty-five, of a hot complexion, full of blood and spirits, who lives in the fertile plains of Barbary, and in easy circumstances, is better able to kiss a woman five times a night in the month of April, than another aged forty of a cold constitution, who lives on the barren mountains of Sweden, and gets his bread with pain and difficulty, can once or twice a night in the month of January.

The sensualities of women are not limited as

ours, otherwise the nobles of Lithuania would not permit theirs to have aid and assistance from abroad, as they do. Truly, women do not feel themselves exhausted, even if they suffer the amorous attacks of a multitude of men successively. Witness the impudent Messalina, and the infamous Cleopatra. The first, having taken upon herself the name of Lycisca, a famous Roman whore, outdid, in twenty-four hours, in a public stew, a harlot that was esteemed the very bravest in love, by twenty-five feats. The other, if we believe a letter of Mark Anthony, one of her gallants, underwent, in one night's time, the amorous efforts of one hundred and six men, without appearing in the least fatigued.





CHAPTER XIII.

Whether a Man feels more Pleasure in the Enjoyment than the Woman.

THERE is no pleasure swifter or greater than that of love; it exhilarating all the body in an instant, and filling the soul with transports. We need no instructions nor means to learn to love, Nature having implanted in our hearts something, I do not know what, of loving, which is cultivated by degrees, as we grow up; and when it incites us to caress a woman, it is hardly expressible how many ways there are to please us: the approaches of love being as delicious as the enjoyment itself. The pain we suffer in loving, pleases before the pleasure itself. In short, all the passions of the soul are, in a manner, slaves to this amorous passion.

The quick and unspeakable sense we have of the pleasure of matrimony makes us know their author. I am of opinion, that God has been willing to make their greatness and excess known, that we might thereby have a foretaste of those we may hope for, for the future. I should never have been bold enough to have advanced this thought, if St.

Austin had not furnished me therewith in the fourteenth book of the City of God, chap. xvii. "I do not wonder," continues he, "that the pleasures we take with women are so excessive, surpassing all that men may be made sensible of, they touching to the quick, both inwardly and outwardly, seeing our body and soul are so much transported, that as holy as we may be, we cannot avoid these pleasures in matrimony, if we apply ourselves to get children."

I cannot be persuaded a man of sense would take pleasure in so often repeating, if nature had not placed excessive delights in the action of love. But the flattering of love being so engaging, it is impossible to be secured from the snares. The pleasures taken in woman's company must needs be great, since devils, according to divines, love them so much.

Daily experience informs us, that the pleasures of matrimony do not render us happy. To the contrary, there are few but what repent after having tasted them, as we said but now: a little reflecting on the attractives of love, will convince us, that they ought not to be our only aim; for to speak the truth, the pleasures of matrimony are only desirable for the sake of generation, and to keep us chaste and obedient unto God's commandments, who is desirous to fill heaven with blessed spirits, the instruments and organs whereof we are: Carnal men do not understand this language, the spiritual ones taste it alone. For those believe, that the good

of marriage consists in the pleasures of the flesh, and believe that hurtful which stints their pleasures. Let such defile themselves and die. But those that aim at nothing but to obey God, and satisfy his commandments, *that have a wife, as if he had none*, as St. Paul speaks, and no greater enemies than those that hinder them from doing their duty, let them be comforted in our Lord.

Love is felt everywhere, those that inhabit grottoes and deserts being subject to its empire; it touches them as well as us; and this passion exerts its power, as well in the most hideous forests, as in the most peopled cities.

Pleasure of the body consists in not feeling any pain: that of the mind is an inward joy of not being made slaves to its passion. But the pleasures of wedlock are something divine, when not passing the bounds of right reason, which obliged the ancients to feign that Venus, who took care of the lawful actions of married people, to be honest and modest, this pleasure being granted by nature as an attractive to the perpetuation of the species.

There is no crime in sharing amorous pleasures with a wife, if we believe Solomon; and we must not imagine that nature has joined pleasures to the conjunction of sexes, to render them criminal.

• Of these three sorts of pleasures, viz., that of the body, of the soul, and of love, the last is without doubt most prevalent and greatest. Our body and soul would in a manner melt with joy, when perpe-

tuating themselves; and these two constituting parts find so much satisfaction therein, that nobody as yet has been able, aptly, to express the raptures.

Both man and woman taste excessive pleasures in mutual caresses; and it is difficult for me to determine which receives the most. Yet seeing we may discover which of the two has the most sensible and twisted genitals, engenders most wind, has the strongest fancy, hottest and most fluid blood, I am apt to believe the question may easily be decided.

No doubt but our privy parts are more sensible than those of women, being all nervous; or, to explain myself better, nothing but nerves: whereas the women's parts are fleshy, and consequently less sensible. If, among all the parts of our body, the nerves feel the quickest pain when they are touched, they must also receive the greatest pleasure. Besides, our spermatic vessels, through which the seed passeth, are extremely twined and twisted, and our testicles, properly speaking, only a contexture of nerves and vessels, folded one under another; that could we untwist the spermatic vessels, and afterwards measure them, I should not tell a lie in saying, that they are eight or ten times longer than we are tall; whereas those of women are not longer than a finger.

Winds being necessary for the pleasures of love, we must own, that as men are more irregular in their way of living than women, they engender

also a great deal more winds and flatulent spirits.

We have also a firmer mind, and stronger fancy than women. The filaments of our brain are more stretched and hard, and when we love, 'tis with force and spirit. Women, on the contrary, are of a more inconstant mind, and weaker fancy. The fibres of the brain are soft, and more flexible; and though they appear sometimes to love more ardently, yet they do not feel so much pleasure in caresses as we.

In fine, our blood is sharper and hotter than theirs, being agitated with more force; and some men will shake with cold at the approach of a woman they have a mind to embrace; the heart and brain, sending at such a time, the greatest part of the heat and spirits with precipitation to the genital parts.

When the seed, swollen with spirits, makes its passage through our twisted vessels, we are drunk with joy. The hot and tickling vapours that arise from it, and the precipitate motions of the spirits that penetrate the membranes, contributing not a little to these sensualities.

Although women are touched to the quick by the pleasures of love, when we embrace them, yet I cannot believe that their sensibility is so great as ours; their seed being liquid and less hot, is not filled with so many spirits, and does not sally out with that swiftness as ours.

Whatever it be, one may say that the question

is still undecided, and that it cannot be determined, unless we choose Tiresias for umpire; who having been both man and woman, can best judge which of the two sexes receives the most pleasure. He decided in favour of Jupiter against Juno, and gave his verdict, that women took more pleasure than men in mutual caresses.

Indeed, we may say, that the genitals of women are agitated with more violence, when they desire to be moistened by the man's seed, and that they feel great pleasure when their parts draw, and suck out humours for conception; besides, seeing they waste by considerable evacuations, some have been induced to affirm boldly, that the pleasure of women surpasseth by one third that of men.

But without confining myself to answer this last opinion, I shall conclude with Hippocrates, that women feel less pleasure than men; but theirs is of longer duration; for nature having made our pleasure short-lived, has also made it excessive; whereas that of women being less, is made up in its longer continuance; and without doubt this made Tiresias give it for Jupiter, taking duration for the excess of pleasure.





CHAPTER XIV.

Whether the Women are more constant in Love than Men, and why?

THE seasons have much influence upon our bodies and humours; insomuch, that we differ from ourselves in summer and winter, choler abounding in the first, and phlegm in the latter; so that the variety of our temper may be measured by the nearness and remoteness of the sun. Our blood is heated in summer, and dried in autumn; winter cools it again, and spring moistens it, and renders it fluid; the diversity of seasons changing our temperament, because it changes the liquors of our body; and as our inclinations, according to Galen, are derived from our temperament, and our constitution changes through variety of seasons, as experience evidences, there is no room to doubt but we are at present different from what we were before.

Besides, variety of climates cause variety of inclinations. We are of a quite different humour in winter at Archangel, and at Alexandria in Egypt the following year, during, the same season: the air, water, the manner of living, and other things changing

our constitution, that it differs in a great degree in those two places, and produces quite opposite effects. But age more than all we have said renders us inconstant. We abhor at present what we desired in our infancy, and old age cannot abide to think of the weakness of our younger years: so that we love and hate in every period of our lives. Nay, we change every year, every month, and even every day; and no wonder that our soul is so wavering, since it makes use of our blood and constitution for the performance of its most refined actions.

Change seems natural to us. We have no sooner met with any thing constant and assured, but we flinch and return to our inconstancy: we are true Pyrrhonians, wavering perpetually between truth and falsehood.

When we reflect on our nature, we can hardly believe ourselves guilty of so many contradictions. Let us look back on antiquity, to see if we can meet with any man that has squared his life to a firm and steady rule; and when such a one is found, let us examine him if he is no counterfeit; let us practise his rules, and follow his model of life in private, to know whether we are able to execute the method of life by him prescribed; and after all, I am sure nobody can be found, whose life and actions have been constant. 'Tis nothing but flights proceeding from an unsteady mind. Fancy magnifies objects, and makes them shew bigger than they really are. We are not in the

least guided by reason: custom, fashion, opinion, inclination, appetite, and opportunities, manage us most. Our will is not even; we have a mind, and not a mind. To-day we would have a wife, and to-morrow a mistress. Our life is nothing but an irregular and unequal motion. We render ourselves uneasy by our unsteadiness; and I dare boldly say, that man is the most inconstant, and most awkward creature in the world. The magistrate, whose reputation is established, and age venerable, and whose gravity commands respect from everybody, seems, according to the outward appearance of things, to be governed by the sound reason of a judge, and to pass over vain circumstances that only work upon weak minds. He comes into the hall with a Catonic gravity, and sets himself upon the bench to render justice: but if the lawyer displease, if his voice is harsh, or that he stammers, or has an ugly countenance, or perchance lets his coif drop, then the gravity of the magistrate comes to nothing; and these little circumstances may be enough to put him upon an injustice, and make the lawyer lose his cause. Good God! how far does the inconstancy of man reach? Feverish people have some motions that are inimitable in health.

The lady, whose history Petronius relates by the mouth of Seneca, was an example of charity to all her neighbours. Troth, nothing would serve her turn but she must die in the sepulchre near the corpse of her deceased husband; yet this same lady

was basely drawn in by a soldier, who tells and does such things to her, as good manners will not give me leave to rehearse. Some little while before, this woman was sad even unto death, and in an instant no joy can be compared with hers. She has a sense of happiness, but it is the happiness of a phrenetic person that is raving and delirious. Mankind is a chameleon, that changes colour according to the different places he is in. There is no occasion for other examples; and if amongst thousands, we have a mind to choose, Pope Boniface VIII. was never the same during all his pontificate, but fickle and inconstant; and the glory of Augustus, for all his greatness, was tarnished by his inconstancy. Indeed, we do not walk, but are driven sometimes by gentle persuasions, and sometimes by violence. He that was yesterday very courageous, being heated by necessity, anger, or wine, is to-day one of the greatest cowards in the universe. What is this but uneasiness and inconstancy? yet this variety has its causes, seeing it is so very natural to mankind.

May be I should not mistake, if I attributed our inconstancy to the order established by God in nature, which is only preserved by reciprocal and successive changes. The stars are never at rest; seasons are quite opposite to one another; the elements that enter the composition of mixed bodies are always jarring, yet so as not to destroy one another. All generations in the world are made

and preserved by changes; man himself is formed in his mother's womb of different matters, and preserved by the diversity of their motions. The heart, the throne of the soul, is not always in the same situation. The blood, by which we live, is composed of different particles, and we could not subsist, were its matter and qualities equal. In fine, there is nothing in the whole world but what is produced and preserved, and by inconstancy. Thus the instability of our temper causing the inconstancy of our inclination, contributes to the beauty of the reasonable world, and renders us variable and fickle.

Now since our actions depend upon our constitutions, and that our temper is inconstant through the variety of our humours, we may conclude, that man is the most fickle, and most inconstant of creatures; and that reason, far from remedying the weakness, serves only to augment his inconstancy.

Having proved that both sexes are naturally inconstant, as also discovered the cause thereof, I shall at present examine which of the two, the man or the woman, is, generally speaking, most inconstant; and afterwards come to particulars, viz., which of the two is most fickle in love.

We are clearly of opinion (which is confirmed by many writers) that men are generally hotter than women; they are sooner formed in the mother's womb, stir sooner, and are somewhat sooner born; they also proceed with greater strength and vigour

in what they enterprise, and have a fuller and stronger pulse; and as males among all other creatures are stronger than the females, we may also allow men to be more vigorous than women. I have cited in the same place some opinions, that would have women be of a hotter temper than men: and withal shewn their gross mistakes. The reasons there by us alleged, making it evident, that women are generally colder and moister than men.

I shall therefore pass by these difficulties, as being decided elsewhere in a clear and convincing manner. It shall suffice me to add, that women being generally cold and moist in comparison to men, their fancy is consequently more feeble, their reason less solid, and their will more fickle; because the force of these faculties depending upon the heat, spirits, and firmness of parts, it follows, that the faculties of their souls are more feeble and languishing.

Upon this principle, lawyers will have women have guardians, and make them render an account of the administration of the goods or property of their children; they not being able, according to Cicero, to give any good advice. They would also have them put to death before the men, in order to discover what they have a design to know of notable conspiracies; for women being weaker than men, they are taught by experience, that this is the best method of proceeding. Indeed, women are as fickle as children,

and their temper almost the same; for being moist as they, and what moderate heat they have, huddled up in a great deal of moisture, their inconstancy and weakness is apparent every moment.

Solomon, the wisest of men, who knew women better than we, compares them to the wind, and speaks much to the purpose in saying. "That he that has a woman in his possession, and endeavours to keep her to himself, is like to him that retains the wind with his arms." Indeed women are naturally very fickle, and easily carried away by small and frivolous matters through the weakness of their judgement. They delight in trifles, and spend all their lifetime in giving proofs of the inconstancy of their sex; their stature is small, their strength indifferent, their actions languishing: in one word, they are weaker and more inconstant than men.

Men, on the contrary, are lustier, more vigorous, and more active: they have better conceits, and argue with more strength, they are more firm and resolute in their business, more constant in their undertakings, and bolder in their actions; their constitution being hotter, dryer, and stronger: it is without doubt for this reason, that the Scriptures allow them the superiority over the women, and to be lords and masters of the family.

The constancy of some women put to the rack shall not make me change my opinion. We know that the fair Leæna chose to cut out her tongue, and spit it in the face of the executioner, rather

than reveal any thing of the murder of the tyrant; and that the constant Epicharis resolved to die, rather than own any thing of Nero's conspiracy. But such examples being scarce, and a great many required to establish a general maxim, I shall continue in my opinion, viz., that women are generally more variable than men; but may be upon some occasions less inconstant than we, which we are going about to examine.

Love is such a waggish and violent passion, that its excess is more commonly observed in little than great souls. I own nobody is exempted from its empire; but to speak the truth, *the weakest goes to the wall* in this passion; of which number women are. And perseverance being a quality inseparable from love, we may conclude, that women love longer, and are more constant in their love than we are: for love ceases when we discontinue it; and there must be real love to authorize one to say, that he loves.

If we observe what passes daily in the world, we may be convinced of this truth; experience teaching us, that the modesty of women hinders them from flying out, and at the same time obliges them to love only such as they are allowed to be free withal. Besides, modesty is a certain shame, that keeps them in their duty, and renders them constant against their own will. I must say the same of that fearfulness, which commonly accompanies the fair sex. Reservedness also, which is

so natural to womankind, comes not far from constancy; and one may say, that it is its inseparable companion.

Moreover, there are few women but what love those desperately that obtain the first favours from them. They are so tied to the first lover, that if by some great consideration they are obliged to be allied to others, they still preserve some tenderness in their heart for him that had the flower of their virginity.

Besides, we know they are more sedentary, and less proper for business than we; and that solitude, and looking after house-keeping, withholds them from company; that they have not so many opportunities to be false as we.

Lastly, the law retains them, by punishing severely such as are loose, condemning them to be shaved, and thrown in a monastery, for being too inconstant in love.

I shall pass by the example of some women, that have flung themselves away by the heat of their constitution; though Lepida, Nero's aunt, under the name of Quartilla in Petronius, did never know herself a maid; though the two Tullias, and two Joans, of Naples, gloried in being caressed by a great many men, the general proposition may be true, viz., that women are more constant in love than men.

If we reflect on our constitution, and inclinations, which are derived from it, we may be convinced,

that love does not tyrannize over us to that degree as over women. We are embarrassed by a multiplicity of business, and to divert ourselves, we fall in with the play-toy we meet with; our great heat emboldening us to make new conquests. We make sure of the first that comes in our way, and for the most part oft satisfy ourselves when opportunity favours. Our mind is too free to be subject to a tyrannic constancy; and being disgusted with one person, we are prompted to change our diversion. She that pleases one week, displeases another, and the little pets that happen in the caresses of one, are soon changed into new hopes for another. We are apt to believe that new pleasures are of a different nature from the past, and our natural inconstancy is fomented by false insinuations and alluring hopes.

Moreover, men feel greater pleasure, and waste more than women; and as their disgusts are more insupportable, and better grounded, the God of Love lays in wait to extend his empire by insinuating persuasion, that change is far more agreeable and voluptuous than constancy; and we are so simple, notwithstanding our experience to the contrary, as to be cowardly led away by these secret persuasions and hidden motions; witness an infinite number of men that know perfectly how to love, yet, in imitation of Ovid, are the most inconstant, Tibullus and Propertius have no reason to tax women with inconstancy: the first forsaking Delia for

Nemesis, and afterwards discarding both to caress Neæra, and the other not being content with Cynthia alone.

A certain woman said very wittily, "That she earnestly desired the caresses of several men, because she was a reasonable creature." Whence one may infer, that men having a stronger reason than women, they make use of it upon the same terms and conditions. The most reasonable people are exposed to the softness of love; and it being natural to all the world, there are few that can escape its attractions. But excessive love being a distemper common to both sexes, those that have great strength of mind resist its tyranny more courageously, and though sometimes smitten, change objects to avoid the alarms and inconveniences it causes; whereas little souls are not able to resist those secret motions: besides being more fearful, they are cowardly led away through the weakness of their condition, and always continue tied to one person.

It being true therefore, as experience itself witnesseth, that men cannot long subject themselves to the empire of love, and that their flights and sallies are only the effects of its secret inspirations, we may conclude, that they are much more inconstant in love than women.





CHAPTER XV.

Of the Advantages procured by the Pleasures of Matrimony.

IF moderation is of use in any thing, it ought, without doubt, to be so in the embraces of women. This virtue being necessary for the preservation of our health, or recovery of it when lost: so that if we stray never so little from its maxims, we shall infallibly plunge ourselves into the inconveniences mentioned before.

Were there no excess in the passion of love, and nobody hurt by it, there would be no occasion for any remedy: but it is just, as also useful, to discover our weakness and corruption, to find a remedy; and it is equally unjust not to make use of it, after having found it. For this reason may be it is, according to the testimony of Leonardus Coqueus, that the Church permits now-a-days, as also in St. Austin's time, courtezans, from whom our distempers and the remedy proceeded.

Although love is the strongest of passions, and there is nobody but what lives under its empire, and is subject to its laws, yet I am persuaded that

we may in some measure resist its violence, and avoid the precise execution of its orders. Zeno may serve for a proof of what I say, who never kissed a woman but once during his life, and was over and above in civility rather than obliged to do it.

Indeed, our health would be more perfect if we used the pleasures of love with prudence. There ought to be a certain gravity in the heat of our pleasures, in order to become fathers, which is not when we only aim at satisfaction.

Impatience and grief that disturb our quiet would not be so frequent. We might live with less disquiet, and pain would not so often take place of tranquillity. We might divert ourselves without smarting for it, whatever our constitution might be. We should neither languish nor tire after having caressed a woman, and our health would be better confirmed, having discharged what was superfluous in us: the natural heat being never more firm than when no impurities embarrass its actions, and disturb its effects. The same thing may be profitable and prejudicial, according to the use that is made thereof. Abstinence often cured the infirmities of Charlemagne, and this was almost the only remedy against all his distempers as long as he lived; and the same abstinence at last put him in his grave. The cold bath that comforted Augustus, killed Marcellus a little while after. And love, that causes so many disorders when we abuse it, procures a

great deal of comfort when reason and necessity govern our proceedings.

There is nothing in the world more refreshing to those that are bilious than the caresses of women; and what heat they find in the action is but transitory, and seldom outlives the diversion. All constitutions find benefit by it, the action warming the phlegmatic gently, and exciting the sanguine. The melancholy become gay, and by this means drive away their sadness and timidity; their best appetite and debauched stomachs are restored. This gave the name of Anticyra to the courtezan Hoea, because she distributed an assured remedy against the black humour. Indeed, the pleasures we take with women cure our melancholy sooner, and have a better effect, than all the hellebores of physicians, the very thought of love enlivening and strengthening us, by augmenting our heat, and dispersing the black and thick splenetic humour.

The man that Galen speaks of, who was so much touched with the death of his wife, that he resolved never to have another, finding himself troubled with indispositions of the stomach, and a sadness, without any cause or reason he could think on, was at the last obliged to break his vow, and join amorously with another, in whose arms he quickly recovered his health. Although conjugal copulation is termed by some a *slight epilepsy*, yet it cures this great distemper, and several others that cease upon the first pleasures we take with women, and upon the

first evacuation of blood that women suffer in their privy parts.

The fiercest animals are tamed at the approach of one of their females. The tiger is no longer a tiger when with its mate. Let a man be never so passionate, he becomes tractable and modest near a woman; and some furious maidens and widows are not appeased but by the embraces of a man.

All great humidities of the brain, and fatal deflections, that often cause incurable distempers in the throat and thorax, are for the most part only prevented by the moderate pleasures taken with women. The insufferable heaviness of the body, and unaccountable weariness we are subject to, when leading an idle life, and making good cheer, are only cured by this medicine. The wrestlers found out this expedient formerly to refresh themselves, and were more brisk and stronger after having diverted themselves with women.

This amorous exercise obliterates all troublesome dreams: we sleep with tranquillity after it. And as an inordinate love causes blindness, by dissipating our spirits, so moderation renders our eyes clearer, in voiding the humidities that disturb our sight.

The voice, as wavering, and broken as it seemed before, becomes stronger and firmer; the heat of the heart increases without being troublesome, and the strength of our entrails shews itself by the vigour of their actions. The stomach generates no more winds and crudities; no farther murmuring is heard

in the intestines; and the kidneys, that were rendered heavy by the weight of the seed, are comforted by the discharge of this matter.

In fine, it is a sovereign remedy against the green sickness; and a young woman, who formerly frightened people by her yellow looks, will soon be restored to the white and red complexion, which is a sure sign of perfect health. After the first amorous combat, she will perceive her blood come from herself, as a proof of the victory of love, peace, and plenty, which will soon follow; for after a good complexion, fruitfulness will heap joy upon this person, who almost despaired both of the one and the other.

A young widow that has been troubled with suffocations, to a degree being threatened with a sudden dissolution, is no more subject to these inconveniences after being married again. In fine, the morning Venus presages nothing but the beauty of the day, and the pleasures of life: it is that, which being well regulated, makes us become fathers of several children, and restores our plight, which we before lost by loving too much.

A young man that is turned pale, whose eyes are sunk and hollow, lips wan, voice unsteady and interrupted with sighs, who neither eats nor drinks, and is ready to expire through the excess of his passion, has no sooner obtained possession of his beloved object, but he recovers his force by degrees, his former good case returns, his health is for the future more firm and stable. Never could

Antiochus have recovered his, if Seleucus had not permitted him to enjoy Stratonicé; nor would Justa, wife of the consul Boëthius, have recovered her languishing, if Pilades the comedian had not had pity and compassion of her.

I would not imitate the physician Apollonides, that mistook the distemper of Amytis, wife to Megabyzus, and daughter of Xerxes, so grossly; for the doctor counting her hectic fever might be one of those distempers that are cured by love, advised her to the embraces of a man; but Amytis some time after not finding any relief by this sort of physic, complained to her mother of it, and she told it Xerxes: the king was so concerned thereat, that he condemned the doctor to be interred alive, which was executed in the same instant.

Gout, according to physicians, for the most part engendered by the caressing of women, is also sometimes cured thereby; and there have been some gouty persons that have received comfort when they have used it with moderation. In effect, there is no surer or safer means to preserve health, and avoid a sudden death, than now and then to take a frisk with a woman. The poet Lucretius would never have killed himself, if he had enjoyed the fair one he sighed for; and that maiden of thirty years Riolanus dissected, would not have lost her life if she had married; for the seed would not have suffocated her natural heat, and the left testicle would not have grown as big as a fist by the plenty and

retention of that matter. The maiden dissected by M. Le Duc, not long ago, in the Hospital General of the *Salpetrière* at Paris, could not have died of madness of the womb, if her left testicle had not been as big as a fist, by the retention of a thick seed.

Whereas irregular love makes us stupid, love that is prudently managed causes health, inspires courage, and renders us agreeable. A clown that is naturally thick-skulled, appears quite another man when he loves, and is, it may be, in a capacity to dispute with another that is abundantly more witty, when beauty and wit are the movements of his passions.

It is true then, that the embraces of women cannot do us any harm, provided we take Hippocrates' advice (who will not suffer us to kiss but in the spring, which is the most proper season for this exercise) and not follow it to excess. Those lawful sensualities load us with all sorts of good things rendering our souls satisfied, and increasing the strength of our body, insomuch that if even we should have taken poison that might begin to destroy the vigour of our heat, copulation, if we believe the naturalists, would be a sufficient remedy to keep off the malignity.

When the only drift is to get children, when the dictates of nature are followed, and men stirred up by the ticklings of the seed, as we are by the irritation of other excrements, we never run the risk of our health in the diversions; which Euripides

quoted elsewhere, has very well expressed in another tongue

And to speak really what I think on this subject, an old man of seventy will be in a condition to caress a young woman, and get children, if he has not taken too much liberty with the ladies during his youth. That is what the oracle would say to the Spartans, when it commanded them to erect a statue in honour of Venus, with these words written in foreign characters, "Venus that has an eye upon old age;" giving us thereby to know, that she is no enemy to our health, if we follow her counsils with prudence.





CHAPTER XVI.

The Happiness of a Married State.

MARRIAGE being instituted by God in the terrestrial Paradise, sufficiently shews his will and pleasure therein. Adam in his state of innocence stood in need of a helper, as the Scriptures signify: and why should we be unhappy in such an alliance as rendered our first father happy? It is a wrong notion to believe, according to the opinion of some, that he diffused misfortunes throughout all the universe, when he had orders to "increase and multiply."

There is no state of life more honourable than Matrimony, because it is a condition which makes the best presents to Church and State,—children, who are to be looked upon as favours from heaven, as St. Jerome himself must own, who extols virginity to the skies. In the Old Testament, matrimony was so highly esteemed, that it had the advantage to be above all other conditions of life; insomuch that it is obvious, that in the ancient law it was preferred to virginity, and the barrenness of women counted a kind of reproach.

Matrimony was not only held in great esteem amongst the Jews; the ancient Christians never put any one into the magistracy, except such as were married: the Pagans themselves have made laws to its advantage; for the Lacedemonians instituted a festival, where those that were not married were lashed by women, as unworthy to serve the republic and to contribute to its honour and welfare. The Romans also crowned the heads of those that had been married several times; and in their public rejoicings they appeared with a palm in their hands, as being as victorious as Cæsar, having contributed to the grandeur of the republic, by the number of soldiers they had be-gotten for its use. For this reason, as St. Jerome says, they crowned a man with bays, and ordered him to accompany his wife's corpse in a funeral pomp, with a palm branch in his hand, and the crown on his head; it being very reasonable, according to the same Father, that he should be carried in triumph to the interment of his wife, since he had been married twenty times, and his wife twenty-two. Having considered the great honour there is in the married state, I come now to shew in the following lecture, the ill consequences of abusing the marriage bed.





CHAPTER XVII.

Of the Duty of Married People.

AFTER travail and child-bearing, the woman forgets the pains she suffered; her flood being no sooner stopped, but she attacks her husband afresh, and gives him an amorous battle. I do not doubt much but she will come off as victoriously as before, and therefore ought to be crowned with *myrtle*; as were anciently those that had made conquests in love: neither do I question her meriting this honour, because she attacks with so much courage, triumphs with so much glory, and shares the fruits of her victory so advantageously with her antagonist. She returns often to the charge, and never cries enough; her genital parts by degrees growing more ardent and more amorous, more unquiet, more inconstant and susceptible of lasciviousness; they are a creature in another creature, that often causes so many disorders in the bodies of women as to oblige them to find out means to sooth and appease it, to prevent its being hurtful.

The husband renders therefore to his wife exactly

what he owes, and the woman what she owes to her husband. When this is wanting on the husband's part, the woman turns ill-humoured, and slyly acquaints him with the grief she conceives in not being beloved; that we may say that conjugal caresses are the ties of love in matrimony, and that they really make up the essence thereof: but upon some occasions a man commits no crime, neither against the laws of Scripture nor society, in refusing to please his wife.

It is a sin against our constitution, to please anybody and injure ourselves, according to the opinion of physicians, at least when the inconveniency thence arising is somewhat considerable. How can we always furnish matter for the irregular sensualities of a woman? sight decaying, rest being disturbed, the stomach and head suffering, the legs being weakened: and how can a man be fit to do his duty in regard of his affairs domestic and foreign, after being exhausted in excess of conjugal embraces?

The least inconveniences that happen from the excess of those pleasures, dispense him absolutely from his duty to his wife; and to act otherwise, is sinning against one's self, and drawing great infirmities, and an unseasonable old age upon one's head. Such as have been afflicted with a distemper in the parts most necessary for life, can with greater justice plead a dispensation; if such an indisposition should have been but slight, yet they ought to be cautious in caressing their wives Infirmities in the

extremity of the body that are periodical, ought also to exempt men from that duty, unless they have a mind that pleasure should be the cause of their misery: the man has far greater occasion than the woman to excuse himself from the duty of wedlock; he in a manner alone acting in conjugal caresses, seems by his precipitate movements to hasten to the end of his pleasures, in order to renew them another time; as if nature being about to produce a man, was minded to prevent our reflecting on what we are chiefly doing, by the excess of pleasure we meet with in the action. The woman's case is quite different; she being only passive, and in a very easy posture, there is seldom any obstacle on her side, that can dispense her from what is done by her husband; sickness is not a lawful reason enough, she being often subject to infirmities that are cured only by love, when no other prescriptions or medicines are able to overcome them. *Priapus* hath more power and strength than our drugs, his authority is more sovereign, and his medicines far more efficacious than *Mugwort*, the *Larabe Casteorum*, and what other medicines antiquity has procured for those infirmities. There is some difficulty to determine, whether a woman big with child may be wanting in that duty to her husband; opinions are various; some think a woman may be as vigorously caressed when big, as when not. Witness Julia, daughter to the emperor Augustus; who being big, would persuade people,

she did not wrong her husband in making other men pass in her barge, it being laden with merchandise before. To make use of this woman's thought, others are so scrupulous in this point, as to fancy we commit a great crime in kissing a big-bellied woman, and contribute to the death of her child.

To decide this question, we are only to observe what passes in nature amongst the brutes, and we may see that stags, bulls, wethers, and some other creatures, do not touch their females after they are with young ones: these unlucky accidents we have above observed to ensue upon caresses in these circumstances, are reasons strong enough to beat a man off from attempting it. Miscarriages may happen by a flux of blood, provoked by those amorous agitations. Superfetations may ensue; a *mola*, or false conception, may stifle or suffocate the *fætus*, as Riolanus assures us to have seen. In one word, such accidents may kill both mother and child; whereas to the contrary, child-bearings might be more sure, if we do not touch a woman after her having conceived; nor will the children (in Hippocrates' opinion) be brought forth before their time.

Doubtless these reasons induced the wise emperor of Constantinople, Isaac Comnenus, not to touch his wife after she had conceived; and although his physicians did advise him to it, for the preservation of his health, yet he would never consent, preferring

the health of two persons to that of his own: and it was even a law among some Pagans, if we may believe St. Clement, never to know a teeming woman.

I say the same of nurses, who cannot render what is owing to their husbands without danger; for what probability is there the milk should be good, when the mother is troubled with loathings and vomiting, and suffers other inconveniences that are incident to teeming women? However, if a nurse is got with child by one man, and does not puke in the beginning of her greatness, but is vigorous and sanguine, I cannot see any reason why she may not be dutiful to her husband; and withal suckle her child, the two or three first months of her greatness; the infant in her entrails being then but very small, and not standing in need of much aliment. Some women are better in health when they suckle at such a time, than if they should preserve all the humours for the *fætus* they have conceived; these humours being copious with them, may suffocate the *fætus*, when they are not employed for other uses; which reason obliges us sometimes to bleed such persons, to ease them of the too great quantity of blood, and render the lying-in more prosperous.





CHAPTER XVIII.

The inconveniences caused by the Pleasures of Matrimony.

IT is believed, that the greatest misfortunes that happen to men, proceed most commonly from excess in love or wine, and to speak here of the first only, we must own that it has such charms as the wisest are hardly able to withstand.

This passion keeps no measure; and when it happens to keep any, it loses the appellation of love. Nothing resists its violence; every thing obeys it within and without us, it having as many slaves as there are men. It is not enough to lie one night or two with a woman, and enjoy the pleasures; it goes to months and years, as if this passion was to be no ways assuaged but by itself. The same thing over again, never displeased; the nicest are never disgusted in these adventures; and if such a thing happens, love has art enough to cure these small discontents.

Epicurus, who was counted a great voluptuary, would never caress women, or approve of the pleasures of love; maintaining that women's em-

braces are the chief enemies to our health; that in caressing, all our principal parts suffer, and the soul itself shares in the dismal consequences. Indeed, this passion debauches our mind, sinks our courage, and hinders the elevation of our soul. Instance Solomon, whom antiquity has surnamed the Wise, who was in a manner infatuated by the great variety of women he made use of. Witness besides, the Sardians, who losing their strength with servant maids of the Smyrnians, were shamefully beaten and vanquished by their enemies.

If we would take time to consider the sufferings of both sexes when they loved desperately, we might soon perceive how dangerous it is to swallow the baits of excessive love.

When a man gives himself up to lust, he loses his plumpness and good air; his head grows bald, his eyes tarnished and livid, and that fire which formerly was perceived, is then vanished: he can hardly see what is near, but must have recourse to the industry of men to fortify his sight; yet he is of such a humour, as rather to lose it than to be stinted in his pleasures, as was formerly Theatymé, according to St. Jerome.

The pleasures of love fascinate and blind us, which made the poets feign it without eyes; for in the diversions it procures us, the spirits are so dissipated, that it is impossible there should remain enough to supply other parts.

The brain, which is the principal organ of all

faculties of the soul, cools and dries by the loss of humours we sustain in caresses of women; besides, it is weakened, wasted, and consumed, insomuch that this part has been diminished to that degree in some lascivious men, according to Galen, that it has not been bigger than one's fist. What probability is there then, that brains so disposed, should contribute to the health of the body, and furnish matter for producing of all the functions of the soul?

In fine, the eyes grow sad and hollow through the scarcity of the spirits, the cheeks thin, the forehead withered and callous, the hearing becomes hard, the breath stinking. In short, we are but too sensible of the effects of an inordinate love.

If the head languishes, the breast suffers no less; and as the radical moisture and natural heat chiefly reside in this part, so it puts us so much the sooner in mind of the disorders caused by an indiscreet passion. Men grow phthisical and dried up by too frequent caresses; and some women, if they give suck after having had many children, are subject to the same distempers. The moisture of the heart being consumed by a foreign fire, and a hectic fever lurking under this same heat, shews the cause it proceeds from. There is a difficulty in breathing, and a troublesome drought; they are restless, perpetually coughing without spitting any thing up; and when they spit, it is like blood. As sick as they are, they are void of pain, and make but slight complaints. Oh! how deceiving is any ill caused

by love, even at such times as it is most formidable and dreadful.

But it leaves the saddest impressions in the genitals; the neighbouring parts being more sensible thereof than the other, and suffer for having contributed to the excess of our pleasures. The inconveniences of our secret parts being too many in number do not give me leave to name them severally in this place. It suffices we have spoken of them elsewhere; so we shall only add, that pain and repentance are inseparable companions of often repeated caresses; and we learn by loving too much not to love at all: whence the tomb of Venus, if we believe certain people, is even to this day covered with cold herbs, that resist the fruitfulness of men.

If it was only some transitory pain, or slight repentance that were the only effects of irregular kissing, one might despise its assaults; but besides sterility, and drying up of the kidneys, looseness, and diabetes, one is often afflicted with that infamous distemper that is hardly vanquished either by sweat or salivation. It is so radicating in the marrow of the bones of famous debauchees, that love ought to be a god, and work miracles to pluck it out by the roots.

The function of the stomach is suspended, and heat dissipated, by the loss of spirits and excess of sensuality, producing nothing but crudities instead of chyle. Hence are derived so many catarrhs,

defluxions, gout, and nocturnal pains, which attend such as, during all their life-time, have been devotees of Venus. Weakness is observed in all their joints; and instead of a sweet and gluing humour, which for the most part facilitates the motion of all our parts, there is nothing but a chalky substance found, a true emblem of the impostures of love.

Indeed those excesses are great enemies to our rest, and alter our health by qualities contrary to nature.

The greater the pleasure is, the more pernicious is the excess thereof, so that there must be a medium used to avoid all dissatisfaction. Sensuality is poison, and must be corrected to take off its destructive quality. It is an antimony or quicksilver, which must be prepared before it can do us any good.

Excessive eating stifles the heat of the stomach, violent exercise impairs our strength, and the most innocent pleasures of love become torments when immoderate.

Whilst man lived upon acorns, and drank nothing but water, he was not troubled with superfluous humours, but utterly ignorant of fevers and fluxions. Abstinence was the remedy of such distempers as might sometimes afflict him. But since he has crossed the seas to go to the Indies, and traversed a great many kingdoms to find out China; since he has not been satisfied with the common food that nature out of motherly care furnishes, but has garnished his table with truffles, mushrooms, oysters, and other

things, that rather serve to irritate the appetite, than to maintain life; since he has taken upon him to stuff his stomach with pies, tarts, ragouts, and sweet-meats; since he has not been contented with natural wine, but mixed an infinite deal of drugs to render it either finer or more delicious; since ice has taken the upper-hand of cool cellars; in fine since his growing voluptuous, he is subject to stone, cholic, pain in the stomach, and other distempers, that happen unto him every day.

Whilst man only followed the motion of nature; whilst he never caressed his wife, but after having been several times excited thereunto by the stings of concupiscence, and whilst his reason mastered his passion, he was strong and robust, and never obnoxious to those fatal consequences of secret and criminal distempers. But since he has taken pride in having many wives, passed the boundaries of nature, raised his lust by medicines that provoke the sensual appetite: in one word, since his being luxurious, he is afflicted with weakness of the nerves, gout, stupidity, and abundance of other evils that overwhelm him.

But there would be some comfort in the evils the body endures after frequent embraces, if the faculties of the soul, and its most necessary functions, did not suffer. But the languishings of the soul are far more considerable than those of the body. When the soul is sick, the economy of the body is almost destroyed, the memory lost, the fancy

strays and diminishes. We want prudence and conduct in the most craving occasions of life; and if some small portion of understanding is left, it is only to distinguish that we lose it by degrees. That is one of the most powerful reasons that induced the Latin church not to suffer priests to marry; and St. Paul, who everywhere prefers continence to matrimony, knew very well the mischiefs love causes, being never moderate in its action or consequences, for what passions are not in its train? and not to speak of jealousy, which is a common consequence thereof, what suffering does it not inflict upon those that abandon themselves to it, even to that degree that some have died thereof, as Lepidus. Health, virtue, merit, and reputation, are made use of as a pretext for its establishment; and when it is in possession of the heart, it changes love into rage, respect into abhorrence, and tranquillity into mistrust. Then a man renders the remedy worse than the disease, and instead of curing himself by silence, as did formerly Pompey and Cæsar, the two most famous cuckolds of their age, he discovers and proclaims to posterity his domestic misfortunes.

I may therefore say without exaggeration, that inordinate love is the most pernicious plague that can ever afflict men. It flings us into evils that are absolutely incurable, and feebleness, the immediate consequence thereof, makes the cure difficult. It brings old age upon wings, and throws us in-

sensibly into all infirmities. For in bringing upon us excessive cold and dryness, qualities opposite to the principles of life, it hastens our end, which we did not expect to be so near at hand.

Nay, some have lost their lives in a moment. It was Pindar's destiny to nourish himself by the excess of love, which is a great subject of his *eulogiums*. And Tertullian gives us to understand, that the philosopher Speusippus had not time to mourn and repent before his death, as is usual, after having been diverted with a woman. And in our days the Cardinal of Sancta Cecilia died for loving too much.

Thus extremes hurt us: too much noise deafens us, too much light blinds us, too much distance or proximity prevents our seeing, too much pleasure clogs us, excess doth us harm, we do not feel but suffer.

This made Don Durat, who married a young woman of twenty-two, say very agreeably, "That he would rather die by a clean and well-polished sword than by a piece of rusty iron." This evening Venus is the forerunner of night, and the misfortunes of our life. If she can brag of having brought us into the world, we may justly complain that she has a hand in sending us out of it; so that some people have built her temples, and worshipped her under the title of those two properties.

Love requires none but stout and robust men for its actions. Such as are naturally infirm, and such as are recovering of a distemper, are not in a

capacity of obeying its orders; they stand in great need of natural heat, without going to dissipate it with women, as did one formerly mentioned by Galen, who not being perfectly cured of a violent distemper, died the same night he took some turns with his wife. And Alexander Benoit observes that the senator Viturio being decrepit, was no sooner transported with the pleasures of love but he gave up the ghost.

There is no creature that is more exhausted in amorous pleasures than man: one evacuation alone will cause as much weakness, if we believe Avicenna and experience itself, as forty times the quantity of blood drawn from him. And without doubt for some such reason Democritus blamed all diversions taken with women; being so desirous to preserve his natural strength, that he never seemed to be of a humour to lose it in their caresses. The wrestlers also did not marry, in order to grow stronger and more valiant in the Olympic games. Indeed abstinence from women in some measure is one of the three things that contribute most to the strength and happiness of our lives; for if we go from table with a good stomach, if we do not shun work, and squander our seed, I am persuaded that our health will be perfect and exempted from those evils, that, for the most part, incommoded it.

Yet the embraces of a woman are neither criminal nor dangerous, nor the action immodest: excess only, which we are often guilty of, is forbidden, it being able to produce all the inconveniences above recited.



CHAPTER XIX.

After what Manner Married People ought to Caress.

I WOULD not have treated of this matter, but that I found it so ill handled in the books of casuists, that no true consequences can be drawn without manifest injury to truth. The ground of this question is found in experiments, the books of nature, or those of famous physicians, which the greatest part of divines, casuists, and confessors have never read; so that I do not wonder that they are so grossly mistaken in this sort of business.

Nature has taught both sexes such postures as are allowable, and that contribute to generation; and experience has shewn those that are forbidden, and contrary to health.

The end of marriage, according to the sentiment of the Church, is to get children, and, in some measure, to allay the heat of concupiscence. Excess is only blamed in the caresses of women, and held a capital crime when passing the bounds of reason. Wherefore the Christian religion abominates such caresses, as only aim at sensualities; and physic being only bent upon the preservation of men's

health, prescribes rules for the right use of such refreshments as nature allows of.

The postures the courtezan Cyrené formerly invented, to the number of twelve, published by Philaenis and Astyanassa, composed in verse by Elephantis, and afterwards by the order of the emperor Tiberius painted about his hall, are full demonstrations, that women are better versed in the pliancy of love than we, because they give themselves more up to sensualities. Indeed their passion is more violent, and their pleasure of a longer continuance, as fire kept in green wood, through the weakness and fickleness of their judgment. Though a certain author, in these latter ages, has undertaken to treat of the postures of love, and has had them engraven by the Caraccis; yet I am persuaded that he has not met with that success as women that have meddled therewith; they being able to baffle all attempts of this nature in what part of the world soever. Nature teaches both sexes such postures as are allowable, and contribute to generation; and experience teaches such as are forbidden, and destructive to health. The genital parts of men are not contrived to caress standing; our health receiving great inconveniences in a posture so opposite to generation; for all the nervous parts being strained, are put to pain. The eyes are dazzled, and head swims; the back bone suffers; the knees tremble, and the legs seem to yield to the weight of the whole body. In short, it is the spring and source

of all our weakness, gouts, and rheumatisms. Besides, generation is frustrated, the matter communicated not being received as it ought into the place destined for its use, the *vagina* being too much pressed by the posture of the woman in such adventures.

Nor is a sitting posture becoming an orderly love; it being difficult for the parts to join, and the seed to be received, in order to form a child accomplished in all its parts.

Man, according to the laws of nature, ought to have empire over the woman, and being counted lord of all creatures, is very base to submit in love exploits. It is beneath his prerogative to afford such complaisance, and no small breach of his privilege to yield to the caprices of a woman abandoned to such lewd tricks. And it would certainly be more adviseable to put a man upon caressing his wife the back way, than insinuate a dissolution, particularly when the woman is naturally fat, and her belly so prominent, as to baffle the efforts of the common situation.

Instead of getting children, a woman is rendered barren by this posture; what perchance is the product of such caresses, is either small or imperfect. The small quantity of matter furnished by the father, is endowed with so few spirits, that the soul, which must in time animate, and make use of it as an instrument for its faculties, can perform nothing of any value. The children become dwarfs, cripples, hunch-backed, squint-eyed, and stupid blockheads;

and by their imperfections, fully evidence the irregular life of their parents, without putting us to the trouble to search the cause of such defects any farther.

The most common posture is that which is most allowable, and most voluptuous; we speak mouth to mouth, we kiss, caress, when we embrace before.

When a man is too heavy, and the woman extremely tender, I am of opinion, that it is not contrary to the laws of nature to caress sideways in imitation of foxes. One may by this posture avoid all the accidents a tender woman is exposed to in the common situation, and no suffocations or miscarriages ever happen thereupon.

I should here place the posture of caressing a woman the back-way amongst those contrary to the laws of nature, if one philosopher and two physicians were not of a contrary opinion. All the brutes, excepting some few, join often in that manner, nature having taught them no other way to engender. The matrix of females is in a better condition to receive the seed of the male, and better disposed to retain and foment it, it not being able to slide out so easily as in another posture; and experience has confirmed the fact, that woman, before barren, have been impregnated after this manner.

In effect, anatomy shews us, that the womb is a great deal better situated for a conception, when a woman is upon all fours, than when lying on her back. The bottom is lower than the orifice, and the

seed being injected, as it runs, by its own weight, falls down to the place it ought to be preserved in for generation. This posture is the most natural and least voluptuous: the action of love furnishing pleasure enough of itself, without obliging us to seek for it by new figures. I do not in the least doubt but casuists will allow us to make use of this way, as it is to avoid sensualities in the embraces of women.

Moreover, as the law commands the husband to perform duty to his wife, when she seems to love him ardently; so the same law commands the woman to return the same duty when he cannot overcome his passion by other means. If peradventure she should have a mind to quench his concupiscence about the latter end of her going with child, why might he not be suffered to caress her backwards rather than stifle the child that is upon the point of being born, or go somewhere else to commit a crime. There is no fear of miscarrying in this posture, the back bone suffering rather than the belly, by such joggings and joltings as men generally exert in such encounters.

Indeed, St. Thomas, whom divines count the best of casuists, is of this opinion: he teaches, that it is no crime for married persons to caress the back way, provided it be not to take excessive pleasure, but only for lawful reasons; as when a man's belly is too big, or there is fear of stifling the child that draws near its birth.

Paulus Aegineta, and Mercurialis, following the philosopher Lucretius, are of this opinion, that women conceive sooner in being caressed the back way than the other; and I no wise think they would speak of the enormous crime, which the Scriptures do not distinguish by any name, nobody conceiving after that manner; and philosophers, who follow the laws of nature, being commonly averse to motions that subvert its general maxims.

But here I am more sensible than elsewhere, that the things I treat on are too tender to be largely handled. I protest, that it has not been in my power to make choice of milder terms to explain my thoughts upon this subject; and if sometimes I have passed the bounds of decency, as did formerly St. Austin, you must ascribe it to the strength of the matter in hand.





CHAPTER XX.

Of the Time that Men and Women cease to Engender.

THE world is full of productions, even in the very entrails of the earth. It is the only means to keep up the tie and union of the universe. Man being the ornament of the world, is no ways remiss in generating; from the age of discretion to old age, he is perpetually employed in an amorous commerce, as if his aim was rather to eternize human nature, than to preserve life and health. For, without dispute, the most lascivious and most voluptuous are the shortest lived. Sparrows, which love their females so desperately, live not above three or four years. The natural heat being wasted by love, and wanting before its time, makes them also end their days the sooner.

We have before taken notice of the time that men and women begin to engender; at present we shall examine what time they leave off.

Although physicians prolong the time of the first old age to sixty-five years, and believe that a man may in the common course of nature procreate to

such an age; yet the lawyers tie themselves up to sixty, after which they pretend a man is impotent, and have made laws accordingly. Indeed, love forsakes us at those years; and though we may preserve some sparks of it in our heart till death, yet they seldom kindle in our secret parts after sixty, age freezing us up to that degree, that whatsoever heat and spirits we have, are required for our more immediate preservation, and too scant to suffer any dissipation.

The motions of nature are regulated, and its productions determined, as we have proved above: And though some men have got children at seventy, eighty, or one hundred, they must not be made use of as a rule to limit generation in men.

We are told of the duke de St. Simon getting a child at seventy-two, whose christening the king and queen were at. And what *Æneas Silvius* reports of Udaliflaus, king of Poland, getting children at the age of ninety years, is rather prodigious than natural. Felix Platerus reports a greater wonder of his grandfather, who engendered at one hundred years of age; and finally, what Massa says upon this subject is more incredible, viz., that a man of seventy years of age got his wife (who was sixty) with child, which was born imperfect sixteen months after conception.

The woman's case is different, they having a more limited and shorter time than men; whenever their terms cease upon their growing aged, they

leave off engendering. For which reason, the law hath determined as judiciously in regard to women as to men, deeming those child-bearings prodigious that happen after fifty years, and admitting no children for legitimate, that are born after such time: because, in the opinion of most physicians, the terms cease about the age of forty-five, or sixty, and consequently it is impossible a child can be engendered, when the woman stands in need of things necessary to form and nourish it.

Yet if some women are so vigorous and healthy, as to have their terms after the age mentioned but now, it would be a piece of injustice to deprive a child that they shall bear of the inheritance of its parents. No doubt but this reason obliged the emperor Henry to cause his empress, aged fifty years, to be delivered publicly, and in sight of all the world, to take away all suspicion that might be formed upon this account.

Thus, all the law limits, are the periods of generations that most frequently happen; yet there may be some extraordinary occasion, wherein it ought not to take place, provided men are vigorous, and the terms are not wanting in women. For no law can be made so just, but it may be prejudicial to some particular persons, when penned up in such general terms as to exclude everybody from receiving any favour.

FINIS.



